

INTERPRETATION  
OF THE PRINTED PAGE

— H. CLARK —



## *WALT WHITMAN*

Books are to be called for, and supplied, on the assumption that the process of reading is not a half sleep, but, in highest sense, an exercise, a gymnast's struggle; that the reader is to do something for himself, must be on the alert, must himself or herself construct indeed the poem, argument, history, metaphysical essay—the text furnishing the hints, the clue, the start or framework. Not the book needs so much to be the complete thing, but the reader of the book does. That were to make a nation of supple and athletic minds, well-trained, intuitive, used to depend on themselves, and not on a few coteries of writers.

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## *JOHN RUSKIN*

The foundational importance of beautiful speaking has been disgraced by the confusion of it with diplomatic oratory, and evaded by the vicious notion that it can be taught by a master learned in it as a separate art. The management of the lips, tongue, and throat may, and perhaps should, be so taught; but this is properly the first function of the singing-master. *Elocution is a moral faculty*; and no one is fit to be the head of a children's school who is not both by nature and attention a beautiful speaker.

By attention, I say, for *fine elocution means first an exquisitely close attention to, and intelligence of, the meaning of words, and perfect sympathy with what feeling they describe; but indicated always with reserve.* In this reserve, fine reading and speaking (virtually one art) differ from "recitation," which gives the statement or sentiment with the explanatory accent and gesture of an actor. In perfectly pure elocution, on the contrary, the accent ought, as a rule, to be much lighter and gentler than the natural or dramatic one, and the force of it wholly independent of gesture or expression of feature. A fine reader should read, a great speaker speak, as a judge delivers his charge; and the test of his power should be to read or speak unseen.



# Interpretation of the Printed Page

FOR THOSE WHO WOULD LEARN TO INTERPRET  
LITERATURE SILENTLY OR THROUGH  
THE MEDIUM OF THE VOICE

*By*

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CHICAGO - - - - - NEW YORK  
ROW, PETERSON AND COMPANY

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## PREFACE

This book is planned for use in High Schools, Normal Schools, and as a foundation for advanced classes in Colleges; but particularly have I had in mind the needs of the teacher of English who has had no special training or preparation in vocal expression. Elocution, problems of voice culture, gesture, and articulation are not touched on, because there are a number of excellent treatises available for the professional teacher; and the non-professional teacher is more likely to be harmed than helped by them. Training in voice and gesture cannot be got out of books, nor from correspondence courses.

The teacher of English can use this book in class with no other training than that derived from the study of literature—which study must always be an inseparable part of the training in vocal expression: and with no other purpose (what higher can there be?) than to give the students such an insight into the meaning and beauty of literature, that the vocal interpretation of it will be a simple, unaffected, intelligent, pleasurable illumination of the text.

The teacher of elocution will, I hope, find in these pages a sound and rational text-book whose lessons can be supplemented by such other instruction as conditions demand. The principles herein presented are basic, I believe, to any method.

The method here presented is the first in the realm

of pedagogy that recognizes *practically* as well as theoretically—what no one of course denies—that thought getting must be the basis of vocal interpretation. I am certain that what explains the poor, inadequate vocal expression in our schools is not lack of technical exercises, but lack of ability to interpret the printed page; and I am almost as certain that the absence of interest in literature, and the mediocrity of results in political economy, history, etc., are very largely due to lack of interest in, growing out of inability to grapple with, the printed page. I have therefore had constantly in mind in preparing this book not only those who want to read aloud, but every person who wishes to get more knowledge and more enjoyment from the printed page. There are hundreds who are interested in increasing their ability to interpret the printed page to tens who want to learn to read aloud; and the method here presented will help the hundreds as well as the tens.

I am under great obligation to Miss Jessie L. Newlin, of University College, of the University of Chicago, for numerous suggestions in connection with the general plan of the book, and particularly for valuable assistance rendered in gathering and selecting the illustrative material.

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## INTRODUCTION

The great majority of graduates from public, high, and normal schools are sadly deficient in ability to interpret the printed page. Thirty years' experience in teaching forces on me that conclusion. In the following pages will be found what I think is ample proof of my charge, sweeping and startling as it is: but in this place I can say only that my statement, often made in public, is all too frequently challenged by those who, relying easily and nonchalantly on their ability to take in at a glance words, phrases, nay, whole pages, never have learned how much of the meaning they miss, and how often they misinterpret it.

No system of popular education can be considered adequate from which the graduates have not derived a serious interest in worth-while things and an ability to grasp the content of books or journals in which things worth while are discussed. And I believe, therefore, that our school system must lay greater stress than it has laid on silent reading—the importance of which seems to be underestimated. It is the only avenue of approach to the larger world for the boy and girl, or the man and woman whose school days are ended. Whether as a citizen who should for patriotic reasons have a lively interest in history, politics, sociology: as an artisan who seeks for help and advice in his life work; as a lover of the beautiful seeking to come into contact with the best that has

been thought and felt by the human race ; or as a mere, plain, matter-of-fact everyday man or woman of affairs who wants to know what is going on, it is the printed page more than anything else that can help.

There is a loud cry for better reading in our schools, and as the demand grows louder and more insistent, we are striving to meet it by classes in elocution, elocution contests, voice classes, courses in articulation, and of late, by the giving of plays. Indeed all of these ways of answering the demand are helpful (with a *little* less emphasis on the “all” when it comes to elocution contests as usually conducted) ; but while they develop ease and facility in expression, they do not go to the root of the matter unless they insist that the only basis for vocal expression must lie in a thorough apprehension of the meaning.

All this is veriest platitude ; and yet I cannot escape the conclusion that in spite of all our training in silent and oral reading (I had almost added “and in English”), in spite of accepted theories about “getting the thought,” the average product of our schools, from grammar grade to college, cannot be altogether trusted to interpret a page of reasonably difficult English.

And the times, too, are none too favorable for such intensive study as I am pleading for. All is rush and hurry, and what does not come to us easily as we read, what is only a short distance removed from the simplicity of thought and language of our everyday life, is dismissed as being *hard*, and hence beyond our grasp. It is an age when the concrete and tangible

are the only things that seem to count with young people. It is so easy to skim over a text that has to deal with abstractions as close to life as "virtue" and "honesty." Typewriting, shop, mechanical drawing; nay, even chemistry, botany, physics, as the pupil comes into contact with them in the laboratory, are "easier," far easier, than one page of solid type.

No one is foolish enough to deny the importance of the vocational and scientific studies. But I would draw attention to the fact that in those subjects the material is tangible, easy to get at and to handle; and above all they afford little training in the attention and concentration necessary to the mastery of the content of books. The data of science are concrete, and so novel, so inherently interesting, that students delight to spend hours in the laboratory learning how the wheels of the universe go 'round. Yet the very tangibility of the data is likely to create an impatience in the student for the serious study of books.

It is not that I plead for less of the methods of science, but for more: I urge that the vocational student and the young student of science include in their curricula more of the intangible material of the printed page; and that the student of literature include more of the rigid method of science in pursuing his courses.

But even in connection with subjects in which books are frequently used, we accept too easily careless, slipshod recitations. How strange it is that in so much of our teaching of reading from primary up so little help is given to the pupil to enable him to get the

full content of the printed page! In the earlier years the stress is naturally laid on learning letters and words, but after the child can "read," we leave all the rest to chance. In a few schools some stress is laid on vocal expression; but alas! too often "expression" is synonymous with gush and show and affectation.

To conclude then: expression is good, valuable, but it must be the natural, spontaneous response to an impression. *Elocution, or expression, or vocal interpretation, whatever it may be called, is not the goal of the reading lesson.* Our schools have made, and many still make, the fatal mistake of taking it for granted that because vocal expression may be of considerable importance as the outcome of the reading lesson, it is of the first importance. It is not. Beautiful as is the adequate vocal interpretation of literature, it is of infinitesimally less worth in a system of education than the ability to interpret silently. For the great majority of men and women, the need for correct impression is the most crying of all.

The method here presented consists of a series of simple progressive steps to master which means the development of ability to get more and more from the printed page, a greater pleasure in literature through a clearer grasp of its content, and finally, the growth of a power to express vocally, in a simple, natural, and effective way, the content of the printed page.

It is not to be supposed for a moment that I would insist on the making of a clear picture of what every word and sentence stands for. It would not only be

sheer nonsense to expect that; it would cause incalculable harm to develop the habit of reading only in pictures. (However, to be fair to those who insist on "getting pictures," I believe they use the phrase in the very general sense of getting the thought.) In fact, we seldom or never see pictures in our daily intercourse. If I am told, "Your lesson in history for tomorrow will be chapter five of Green's *History of the English People*," I certainly do not stop to make a picture of "lesson" and "tomorrow," etc. It would positively stand in my way if I had to get ideas and information in such a fashion. And so it is with all the ordinary conversation and reading of everyday life. The larger our experience with books and the world the easier it is to read *without* the aid of pictures.

But now comes a danger. Young students become so used to understanding people without effort and to reading rapidly that they skim lightly over the page, and many come to the point where that which does not come easily is passed by as being too hard, or not worth puzzling over. It is only those who are well acquainted with the subject-matter who can read rapidly and still understand. I do not mean that it is necessary to read every page of every book so carefully that nothing can escape us. It is quite possible we want to read just to get a general idea of what the author has to say. Some passages are under some conditions to be passed over lightly, and under others to be studied in minutest detail. For instance, we cannot be expected to study closely every word of the baseball news, nor of a railroad accident.

But when we come to good literature *there is no choice*. It was never written for the tired brain, nor for mere entertainment. Every word and phrase has a meaning and a purpose.

In this book I am insisting strongly with Ruskin that one must interpret not only sentences, but words, nay, "letter by letter," for with virtually no reservation the greater part of our educational system is guilty of total disregard of this fundamental need. The only way we can test the value of a method of "teaching literature" is in its results with the students, and I—with the highest appreciation of that small devoted body of teachers of English that insists not on "teaching literature," but on presenting it so that students may learn what it is—I unhesitatingly declare that, measured by the standard of adequate results, it is a miserable failure: it has not developed an interest in literature worth while, let alone a love for it. I concede the world is too much with us; that the cry for practical results drowns out the gentle voice of poesie; that the environment of our students may not be conducive to the study of literature; I grant everything except that all these are no excuse. We must find time and means to present literature for what it is, not as history, not as biography, not as composition, nor philology, nor histology, nor—nor—nor anything but the beautiful. It can never be easy to read good literature, thank the gods for that! but it must be made so interesting, so appealing to what is best in the students that they will gladly work over the text in order to enjoy it. There is no

time to hurry the study of a poem; it is the veriest art of pedagogy to dwell on it and have the class dwell on it lovingly, longingly, and loath to let it go; hanging on every word, every group and sentence; rolling rhyme and rhythm on the tongue as it were—not trippingly, no, Hamlet, not trippingly—until we know it as we know the mother's voice, singing it to ourselves, dwelling on every cadence, flighting to the blue with Shelley's Skylark, going down with majestic steps to Milton's deep within the deep.

There is little love of good literature in America. We don't read it because we don't care for it; we don't care for it because it does not appeal to us; it does not appeal to us because we don't understand it; we don't understand because we don't know how to go about understanding—and our schools seldom show us how.

There is some tendency nowadays to hold that we must learn to skim the printed page. It can't be skimmed unless we want but a bird's-eye view. True, there are some books written to be skimmed (most of which, by the way, might better be left alone entirely): others whose subject-matter is so familiar to a certain reader that he need not dwell on its every detail, because in the past, through patient study, he had mastered the fundamentals of the subject. But this is never true of good literature. Never! Never!! Never!!! The wretched habit of skimming explains not only our lack of interest in and love of good literature, but the inability of the average man and woman to grapple with any book or treatise of weight and

merit, anything outside of the popular treatment of the commonest occurrences of everyday life. Nay, even there, it is appalling how much can be read without understanding, frequently with a perverted understanding. For most people the ability to read (!) is a fatal facility for recognizing words. Their ability leads them to believe that they know and understand, when the truth is their skimming, skipping method destroys their power of concentration, of prolonged attention, their interest in the serious treatment of any subject, including even those most nearly touching their lives. Is it not true that we cannot trust the average graduate of the average high school to give us the gist of a leading article or editorial? And only one child out of nineteen who enter the public school ever gets as far as high-school graduation. What can we expect then of those who drop out at twelve and thirteen and fourteen? Well, at any rate, vaudeville prospers, the "movie" houses are packed and the popular monthly magazines sell by the million. Shakespeare? Oh, yes, "John received a beautiful set for graduation; it's on the upper shelf, left-hand side." In the name of all that is sound in literary culture, what arraignment more terrible could be made of our methods than that virtually nobody reads good literature? Let us at least be honest and not keep talking about our priceless heritage in Shakespeare and Milton and Wordsworth and Shelley and Keats and George Eliot and Emerson, and frankly say they are not for the busy twentieth century.

How then can there be any adequate vocal expres-

sion when there is so little appreciation? Is it any wonder that elocution—a noble art—has fallen into disrepute; that it is a synonym of banality, incapacity, rant, and affectation? How can there be good elocution when the material with which it should deal is outside of the experience of the elocutionist?

I believe that the value of reading as reading has not been fully realized as a truly educative study. First, it is necessary to have a working vocabulary, which is analogous to paradigms, declensions, formulae, theorems, etc. Secondly, the necessity of careful attention to all the facts is not dissimilar from what is required in the laboratory or in the translation of foreign languages. (I dare to suggest that because of the elusiveness and complexity of language the student's powers are more taxed in careful observation of the printed page than in many an experiment in the laboratory.) And thirdly, the training in concentration, in sequential thinking, in logic, in drawing conclusions from observed facts, in detecting errors in statements and in conclusions—all this is, in the highest and best sense of the word, educative.

It is my sincere, earnest, humble hope that the method herein presented may heighten the student's appreciation of what is best in literature, not through accepting my views, or anyone's views, as to what is beautiful in prose and poetry, but through that careful (not necessarily dry), patient study of the text that alone can reveal its innermost meaning.



# INTERPRETATION OF THE PRINTED PAGE

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## CHAPTER I

### GROUPING

Read aloud these lines with no other object than just to utter the words:

This I beheld, or dreamed it in a dream:—  
There spread a cloud of dust along a plain;  
And underneath the cloud, or in it, raged  
A furious battle, and men yelled, and swords  
Shocked upon swords and shields. A prince's banner  
Wavered, then staggered backward, hemmed by foes.  
A craven hung along the battle's edge,  
And thought, "Had I a sword of keener steel—  
That blue blade that the king's son bears,—but this  
Blunt thing!" he snapt and flung it from his  
hand,  
And lowering crept away and left the field.  
Then came the king's son, wounded, sore bestead,  
And weaponless, and saw the broken sword,  
Hilt-buried in the dry and trodden sand,  
And ran and snatched it, and with battle-shout  
Lifted afresh he hewed his enemy down,  
And saved a great cause that heroic day.

—SILL: *Opportunity*.

Now read the first six lines silently, trying to get the author's meaning:

This I beheld, or dreamed it in a dream:—  
There spread a cloud of dust along a plain;  
And underneath the cloud, or in it, raged  
A furious battle, and men yelled, and swords  
Shocked upon swords and shields. A prince's banner  
Wavered, then staggered backward, hemmed by foes.

Have you not noticed in this careful reading a tendency to break up the lines into groups of words? Read the poem again to yourself, very carefully, and note that the more determined you are to get the meaning the slower will you read and the more groups will you make. We might rearrange it something like this:

This I beheld,  
or dreamed it in a dream:—  
There spread a cloud of dust  
along a plain;  
And underneath the cloud,  
or in it,  
raged A furious battle,  
and men yelled,  
and swords Shocked upon swords and shields.  
A prince's banner Wavered,  
then staggered backward,  
hemmed by foes.  
A craven hung along the battle's edge,  
And thought,  
“Had I a sword of keener steel—  
That blue blade that the king's son bears,—  
but this Blunt thing—!”  
he snapt  
and flung it from his hand,

And lowering  
crept away  
and left the field.  
Then came the king's son,  
wounded,  
sore bestead,  
And weaponless,  
and saw the broken sword,  
Hilt-buried in the dry and trodden sand,  
And ran and snatched it,  
and with battle-shout Lifted afresh  
he hewed his enemy down,  
And saved a great cause  
that heroic day.

This deliberate study of the grouping has compelled you to read slowly and carefully; and that is the sole purpose of the lesson. It is easy to recognize words and then to pronounce them, but if one is to get the meaning he must do hard thinking. The author of this poem saw an entire picture, saw a good deal of it in one glance—just as you can close your eyes and recall some picture of home, or sea, or landscape, or farm—but when he wanted us to see what he had seen he had to describe it *group by group*. We must then get these groups one by one and build them up again into complete pictures. For instance, in the lines:

There spread a cloud of dust along a plain;  
And underneath the cloud, or in it, raged  
A furious battle, and men yelled, and swords  
Shocked upon swords and shields,

we see a cloud of dust spreading along a plain, and in the midst of the cloud a battle raging wherein swords

and shields shock, and men yell and scream. If we were looking at a battlefield we should take in at a glance all that the author here describes; but when we read the words, *so accustomed are we to read carelessly and without conscious determination to get the meaning*, that most of us get but a small fraction of the story.

In this first example I have purposely chosen a simple poem. There are no hard words, and the construction is easy. If there were many strange words, and sentences long and involved, there would be several kinds of difficulties to overcome besides that of grouping. But we are taking one step at a time.

Some of the grouping problems in *Opportunity* are connected with the poetic form; but in prose, because it looks easier than verse, there is more temptation than in poetry to run words together without regard for the meaning. Read silently and hurriedly this passage from *Silas Marner*.

The disposition to hoard had been utterly crushed at the very first by the loss of his long-stored gold: the coins he earned afterwards seemed as irrelevant as stones brought to complete a house suddenly buried by an earthquake; the sense of bereavement was too heavy upon him for the old thrill of satisfaction to rise again at the touch of the newly-earned coin. And now something had come to replace his hoard which gave a growing purpose to the earnings, drawing his hope and joy continually onward beyond the money.

Now in order that no part of the picture may possibly escape us let us group the lines as follows:

The disposition to hoard  
had been utterly crushed  
at the very first  
by the loss of his long-stored gold:  
the coins he earned afterwards  
seemed as irrelevant  
as stones brought to complete a house  
suddenly buried by an earthquake;  
the sense of bereavement  
was too heavy upon him  
for the old thrill of satisfaction  
to rise again  
at the touch of the newly-earned eoin.

And now

something had come  
to replace his hoard  
which gave a growing purpose  
to the earnings,  
drawing his hope and joy  
continually onward  
beyond the money.

Of course, the grouping is overdone, but nevertheless it serves to illustrate the principle we are studying. A slow reader might be justified in such detailed study, but after he becomes familiar with the text I think he will find that a grouping about like the following will give the best interpretation:

The disposition to hoard had been utterly crushed  
at the very first by the loss of his long-stored gold;  
the coins he earned afterwards seemed as irrelevant  
as stones brought to complete a house suddenly buried by an earthquake; the sense of bereavement was too heavy upon him for the old thrill of satisfaction to rise again at the touch of the

newly-earned coin. And now something had come to replace his hoard which gave a growing purpose to the earnings, drawing his hope and joy continually onward beyond the money.

(The spaces do not indicate a long pause, but a separation of groups to prevent blurring.)

### EXERCISES

The student will prepare to read aloud in class the following selections to illustrate the principle of grouping. Do not be misled by the seeming simplicity of these passages. While most of the groups are easily apprehended there are several places where the idea will escape you if you are not careful.

Not what we have, but what we use;  
Not what we see, but what we choose—  
These are the things that mar or bless  
The sum of human happiness.

Not as we take, but as we give;  
Not as we pray, but as we live—  
These are the things that make for peace,  
Both now and after time shall cease.

He rose, and clad himself, and girt his sword,  
And took his horseman's cloak, and left his tent,  
And went abroad into the cold wet fog,  
Through the dim camp to Peran-Wisa's tent.

The things which I have seen I now can see no more.

I could not love thee, dear, so much  
Loved I not honor more.

The dead are many, and the living few.

How near to good is what is fair!

A ride of two hundred and odd miles in severe weather  
is one of the best softeners of a hard bed that ingenuity  
can devise.

The sea! the sea! the open sea!  
The blue, the fresh, the ever free!  
Without a mark, without a bound,  
It runneth the earth's wide regions round;  
It plays with the clouds, it mocks the skies,  
Or like a cradled creature lies.

I'm on the sea, I'm on the sea,  
I am where I would ever be,  
With the blue above and the blue below,  
And silence wheresoe'er I go.  
If a storm should come and awake the deep,  
What matter? I shall ride and sleep.

I love, oh! how I love to ride  
On the fierce, foaming, bursting tide,  
Where every mad wave drowns the moon,  
And whistles aloft its tempest tune,  
And tells how goeth the world below,  
And why the southwest wind doth blow!

I never was on the dull, tame shore  
But I loved the great sea more and more.  
And backward flew to her billowy breast.  
Like a bird that seeketh her mother's nest,—  
And a mother she was and is to me,  
For I was born on the open sea.

The waves were white, and red the morn,  
In the noisy hour when I was born;  
The whale it whistled, the porpoise rolled,

And the dolphins bared their backs of gold;  
And never was heard such an outcry wild,  
As welcomed to life the ocean child.

I have lived since then, in calm and strife,  
Full fifty summers a rover's life,  
With wealth to spend, and a power to range,  
But never have sought or sighed for change:  
And death, whenever he comes to me,  
Shall come on the wide, unbounded sea!

—CORNWALL: *The Sea*.

An hour before sunset, on the evening of a day in the beginning of October, 1815, a man travelling afoot entered the little town of D—. It would have been hard to find a passer-by more wretched in appearance. A slouched leather cap half hid his face, bronzed by the sun and wind, and dripping with sweat. He wore a cravat twisted like a rope; coarse blue trousers, worn and shabby, white on one knee and with holes in the other; an old, ragged, gray blouse patched on one side with a piece of green cloth sewed with twine; upon his back was a well-filled knapsack; in his hand he carried an enormous knotted stick; his stockingless feet were in hobnailed shoes; his hair was cropped and his beard long.—HUGO: *Les Misérables*.

Near yonder copse, where once the garden smiled,  
And still where many a garden flower grows wild;  
There, where a few torn shrubs the place disclose,  
The village preacher's modest mansion rose.  
A man he was to all the country dear,  
And passing rich with forty pounds a year;  
Remote from towns he ran his goodly race,  
Nor e'er had changed, nor wished to change, his place:  
Unpracticed he to fawn, or seek for power,  
By doctrines fashioned to the varying hour;  
Far other aims his heart had learned to prize,

More bent to raise the wretched than to rise.  
His house was known to all the vagrant train;  
He chid their wand'rings, but relieved their pain;  
The long-remembered beggar was his guest,  
Whose beard descending swept his aged breast;  
The ruined spendthrift, now no longer proud,  
Claimed kindred there, and had his claim allowed;  
The broken soldier, kindly bade to stay,  
Sat by his fire, and talked the night away;  
Wept o'er his wounds, or, tales of sorrow done,  
Shouldered his crutch and showed how fields were won.  
Pleased with his guests, the good man learned to glow,  
And quite forgot their vices in their woe;  
Careless their merits or their faults to scan,  
His pity gave ere charity began.

—GOLDSMITH: *The Deserted Village*.

Bruce caused his men to lie down to take some sleep, at a place about half a mile distant from the river, while he himself, with two attendants, went down to watch the ford, through which the enemy must needs pass before they could come to the place where King Robert's men were lying. He stood for some time looking at the ford, and thinking how easily the enemy might be kept from passing there, provided it was bravely defended, when he heard at a distance the baying of a hound, which was always coming nearer and nearer. This was the bloodhound which was tracing the King's steps to the ford where he had crossed, and the two hundred Galloway men were along with the animal, and guided by it. Bruce at first thought of going back to awaken his men; but then he reflected that it might be only some shepherd's dog. "My men," said he, "are sorely tired; I will not disturb their sleep for the yelping of a cur, till I know something more of the matter." So he stood and listened; and by and by, as the cry of the hound came nearer, he began to hear a

trampling of horses, and the voices of men, and the ringing and clattering of armor, and then he was sure the enemy were coming to the river side. Then the King thought, "If I go back to give my men the alarm, these Galloway men will get through the ford without opposition; and that would be a pity, since it is a place so advantageous to make defence against them." So he looked again at the steep path, and the deep river, and he thought that they gave him so much advantage, that he himself could defend the passage with his own hand, until his men came to assist him. His armor was so good and strong, that he had no fear of arrows, and therefore the combat was not so very unequal as it must have otherwise been. He therefore sent his followers to waken his men, and remained alone by the bank of the river.—SCOTT: *Tales of a Grandfather*.

A group may contain a single word only, as:

Charge, Chester, charge! On, Stanley, on!  
Were the last words of Marmion.

Hence! home, you idle creatures, get you home.

One, two, three, fire!

Away, slight man!

King, duke, earl,  
Count, baron—whom he smote, he overthrew.

In all reading there is danger of two kinds of mistakes; first, where we get no meaning, or only a partial one; and secondly, where we get the wrong meaning. We come across examples of both forms in this first chapter. Students, then, should con-

stantly ask themselves, Do I get any meaning? or, Is that the right meaning? To be sure, all troubles do not vanish when you have grouped correctly, but this is certain: *Grouping helps to locate the difficulty*, and that goes a long way towards remedying it. Let the following illustrations serve as models. The first shows how impossible it is to get the idea unless we proceed group by group. There is little trouble in the words, thought, or style, but the sentence is long and contains so many ideas, that we get no meaning unless we group carefully.

When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume, among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

In the following passages you may get a wrong meaning unless you are particularly careful in your grouping.

And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.  
(Parse "him" after "make.")

With farmer Allan at the farm abode  
William and Dora.

The fox was seen three nights running in the barn-yard.

We can hardly believe there are such villains in the world; but the fact that there are such shows that we must always be on our guard.

No stir in the air, no stir in the sea,  
The ship was as still as she could be;  
Her sails from heaven received no motion,  
Her keel was steady in the ocean.

O Jimmy, and Johnny, and Willy, friends of my youth! O noble and dear old Elias! how should he who knows you not respect you and your calling.

Moses was the daughter of Pharaoh's son.

Everything depended upon the weather, and although the rough autumn was not come yet the prime of the youthful year was past.

#### LENGTH OF GROUP IN SILENT AND ORAL READING

*No absolute rule can be laid down for the length of groups.* When you read you probably find that your eye takes in clauses and whole sentences at one sweep. The more familiar the words and ideas and the simpler the text the longer will be your groups; but no matter how easy the text, the group seldom exceeds ten to fifteen or twenty words. And contrariwise, the more difficult the text the shorter your groups. You keep saying to yourself, What does this mean? and find yourself breaking the difficult sentences up into small and smaller groups. Of course, after the difficulties are removed—of words, style, ideas, and the like—the hard passages become comparatively easy, and as a consequence you can

take in larger and larger units of thought. In Lowell's beautiful address on *Our Literature* he says:

That nation is a mere horde supplying figures to the census which does not acknowledge a truer prosperity and a richer contentment in the things of the mind. Railways and telegraphs reckoned by the thousand miles are excellent things in their way, but I doubt whether it be of their poles and sleepers that the rounds are made of that ladder by which men or nations scale the cliffs whose inspiring obstacle interposes itself between them and the fulfilment of their highest purpose and function.

There are some hard words in this passage, but even after you get their meaning you still find yourself making many groups in order to get the sense.

And when it comes to reading aloud (which is only a half or a third as rapid as silent reading), again there is no absolute rule for the length of groups. All that can be said is that in reading aloud the groups become shorter; just how short can be determined only by the difficulty of the text and the nature of the audience. When you read silently you scarcely recognize that you are making groups; but in oral reading the groups are clearly separated by pauses of varying lengths. Such a sentence as the following is so simple that, reading it silently, our groups would be rather long; but if we were reading it aloud there would probably be twice as many groups, marked off by pauses.

One night when he was climbing the stairs of his lodging, thinking what he would do the next day, he

heard the angry voices of two men in the room he was about to enter, and he recognized one as that of an old man from Paris who shared the room with him and George.

"Yes," the man from Paris was saying angrily, "I am sure that somebody has broken open my trunk and stolen the three francs which I had hidden in a little box; and the man who did the trick can only be one of the two companions who sleep here, unless it is Maria, the servant. This is your business as much as mine, since you are master of the house; and I will hale you to court if you do not let me at once go through the valises."

Read first silently and then aloud the following to be sure you understand the principle we are discussing. You will see that because the excerpt is hard you make many groups in your silent reading, and that, in your oral reading, you make still more.

But if our relations with the East are in the future characterized by sympathy, tact and fair dealing, if we are not stampeded or unduly agitated by special pleading on either side, we may be able practically to demonstrate our good-will both for China and for Japan, and our readiness to cooperate with other Powers interested in the maintenance of peace in Eastern Asia.—*The New Republic.*

To put the matter briefly: In silent reading we naturally make more and shorter groups where the text is difficult than when it is simple; and, whether the style is easy or hard, we make more groups in oral reading than in silent.

There are two reasons why there are more groups in vocal expression than in silent reading. The first

is that we stop for breath. This does not mean that we do this consciously; but since we cannot read on and on without pausing for breath, we form the habit of breaking up sentences into groups shorter than we should make in silent reading. And this is true, of course, whether we read aloud for ourselves or to others.

And secondly, as we read aloud to an auditor we come to see that, since he has no text before him, he cannot grasp the meaning as rapidly as he does in silent reading, and we therefore more or less unconsciously use the shorter group. It is essential to bear in mind that as the reader becomes familiar with the text there is danger that he may forget that the audience is not familiar with it. This he must never do. He should decide where is approximately the best place to pause and then not forget it. Here is a humorous illustration of the need of much more frequent pausing when reading to another than when reading silently:

Esau Wood sawed wood. Esau Wood would saw wood. All the wood Esau Wood saw Esau Wood would saw. In other words, all the wood Esau saw to saw Esau sought to saw. Oh, the wood Wood would saw! And oh! the wood-saw with which Wood would saw wood! But one day Wood's wood-saw would saw no wood, and thus the wood Wood sawed was not the wood Wood would saw if Wood's wood-saw would saw wood. Now, Wood would saw wood with a wood-saw that would saw wood, so Esau sought a saw that would saw wood. One day Esau saw a saw saw wood as no other wood-saw Wood saw would saw wood. In fact, of all

the wood-saws Wood ever saw saw wood Wood never saw a wood-saw that would saw wood as the wood-saw Wood saw saw wood would saw wood, and I never saw a wood-saw that would saw as the wood-saw Wood saw would saw until I saw Esau Wood saw wood with the wood-saw Wood saw saw wood. Now Wood saws wood with the wood-saw Wood saw saw wood.

Now while it is true that one can lay down no hard-and-fast rule for determining the length of the groups in vocal expression, one can be pretty sure as to their shortness. For instance, one might group

There spread a cloud of dust  
along a plain.

or,

There spread a cloud of dust along a plain;

but no one would read

There spread a  
cloud of  
dust along  
a plain.

---

And so we conclude that a group is made up of an idea, or picture, or a fairly complete part of an idea or picture, and that is about as far as we can go at present by way of definition. Fortunately, however, common sense is all we need to guide us.

As for the length of the group in vocal expression, a good general principle to observe is, *The longer the group the better, all things being equal.* Too many groups tend to becloud the picture, but don't forget *all things being equal.* Make all the groups you

think necessary in order to have your listener get a maximum of your meaning with the minimum of effort on his part; but after that make as few pauses as possible.

A very interesting example of what we have been discussing is found in the next quotation in the clause beginning "bending and straightening," where the picture is that of one continuous action of a man bending in order to take the stones from the man below, and then straightening his back in order to hand the stones to the workman who is evidently standing above him. The last eleven words are better handled as one group:

After a long day passed on the ladder, in the full sun, in the dust, bending and straightening his back to take the stones from the hands of the man below him and to pass them to the man above him, he came home to get a meal at the cheap eating house, dead tired, his legs heavy, his hands burning, and his eyelashes stuck together by the plaster, but satisfied with himself, and carrying his well-earned money in the knot of his handkerchief.—COPPÉE: *The Substitute*.

A slight pause after "below him" could be defended, but, on the whole, the clause is better read without it.

Here are some further examples where longer rather than shorter groupings seem to be preferable:

Without looking to the right or left to notice the scene of rural wealth, on which he had so often gloated, he went straight to the stable, and with several hearty cuffs and kicks, roused his steed most uncourteously from the comfortable quarters in which he was soundly sleep-

ing, dreaming of mountains of corn and oats, and whole valleys of timothy and clover.—WASHINGTON IRVING: *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*.

It is reported in the Bohemian story that Saint Wenceslaus, their king, going one winter night to his devotions in a remote church, barefooted in the snow and sharpness of unequal and pointed ice, his servant Podavivus, who waited upon his master's piety and endeavored to imitate his affections, began to faint through the violence of the snow and cold till the king commanded him to follow him and set his feet in the same footsteps which his feet should mark for him.—JEREMY TAYLOR.

Stand farther from me, lest I should lay hands on you, and I'll tell you what I mean. I mean, taking advantage of a young girl's foolishness and ignorance to get her to have secret meetings with you. I mean, daring to trifle with the respectability of a family that has a good and honest name to support. . . . Do you mean to pretend that you didn't know it would be injurious to her to meet you here week after week? Do you pretend you have any right to make professions of love to her when neither her father nor your father would ever consent to a marriage between you?—ELIOT: *The Mill on the Floss*.

#### GROUPING AND PUNCTUATION

Many people believe that grouping depends solely on punctuation. In a later chapter we will study in detail the relation of punctuation to interpretation, but at this point it is enough to say that punctuation in itself does not determine the grouping and pausing. *The punctuation helps us to get the sense, and*

*the sense, and the sense alone, determines the group.* Have we not found in the first place many illustrations of the groups ending where there was no period, comma, or any other mark? as:

The things which I have seen I now can see no more.

Secondly, in making groups in easy reading we often run over marks of punctuation. When you say, "No, father," strictly speaking you have two groups; for you do not mean "No father," and the comma is inserted to show that you do not mean this: not to have you pause after "No." Again, "Stop, Johnnie" needs the comma to make the sense clear; but one does not pause after "Stop." Should someone ask you, "What are the days of the week?" you answer virtually without pause between the words, "Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday," etc. But if your answer were printed, there would be commas separating the days. So usually in naming the colors in our flag we say, "They are red white and blue." But printed, the sentence reads, "They are red, white, and blue." Remember, it is not claimed that we always run such small groups together; but that we frequently and rightly do so when there is no special emphasis required. (You see, of course, that if we wanted to impress these colors on one who knew nothing about our flag we should not run the groups together.) Here then we come to see how punctuation is used to make the meaning clear. Whether we make three groups or only one, the sense is the same, and the commas are necessary to that sense; but how we ex-

press ourselves depends on the context or setting. These illustrations and many similar ones show us that marks of punctuation do not always indicate a place to pause. This need never confuse the student if he will but remember to read as he would speak.

You need not be reminded of the third classification, that which includes those groups wherein the pause and punctuation coincide. Illustrations abound on every page.

We have now seen that punctuation does not necessarily determine our pauses. It is interesting to know in this connection that the early Hebrews, and Greeks, and Romans had no punctuation at all in their manuscripts, and yet these were read and understood. Here is something in our own language as it might have been printed if there were no such thing as punctuation, and from it you will see that the sense alone determines the grouping.

And he said A certain man had two sons and the younger of them said to his father Father give me the portion of thy substance that falleth to me And he divided unto them his living And not many days after the younger son gathered all together and took his journey into a far country and there he wasted his substance with riotous living And when he had spent all there arose a mighty famine in that country and he began to be in want And he went and joined himself to one of the citizens of that country and he sent him into his fields to feed the swine And he would fain have been filled with the husks that the swine did eat and no man gave unto him But when he came to himself he said How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare and I perish with

hunger I will arise and go to my father and will say unto him Father I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight I am no more worthy to be called thy son make me as one of thy hired servants And he arose and came to his father

Even today an author writes on with no thought of punctuation until he comes to a place when he sees that to make his meaning clear, or easier to get, or to prevent obscurity, some mark of punctuation is necessary or helpful. Here is an illustration where the writer must be very careful with his punctuation because the words may be made to convey two entirely different meanings:

I don't want your gold; but, if you will, stay with us and be our guest: you are welcome.

I don't want your gold; but if you will stay with us and be our guest, you are weleome.

So far as grouping is concerned here, everything depends on the marks after "but" and "will." But when you have the sense in either case you are independent of punctuation marks, and do not need them, let me repeat, to guide your pausing.

The mark, then, is an aid to getting the sense, and the sense and not the mark determines the group.

#### REVIEW EXERCISES

Sir Walter Vivian all a summer's day  
Gave his broad lawns until the set of sun  
Up to the people.

—TENNYSON: *The Princess.*

The good old rule  
 Sufficeth them, the simple plan,  
 That they should take who have the power  
 And they should keep who can.

—WORDSWORTH.

His words are bonds, his oaths are oracles,  
 His love sincere, his thoughts immaculate,  
 His tears pure messengers sent from his heart,  
 His heart as far from fraud as heaven from earth.

—*The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, II, vii.

True hope is swift, and flies with swallows' wings;  
 Kings it makes gods, and meaner creatures kings.

One who never turned his back but marched breast forward,  
 Never doubted clouds would break,  
 Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph,  
 Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better, sleep to wake.

—ROBERT BROWNING: *Asolando*.

Be calm in arguing, for fierceness makes error a fault and truth courtesy.

From the west there sounded the harsh gong of a fire engine which was pounding rapidly down the car tracks. It came, rocking in a whirlwind of galloping horses and swaying men. The crowd on the street broke into a run, streaming along the sidewalk in the wake of the engine. The architect woke from his dead thoughts and ran with the crowd. Two, three, four blocks, they sped toward the lake, which curves eastward at this point, and as he ran the street became strangely familiar to him. The crowd turned south

along a broad avenue that led to the park. Some one cried: "There it is! It's the hotel!"—ROBERT HERRICK: *The Common Lot.*

(How many groups in the second sentence?)

How the guineas shone as they came pouring out! He spread them out in heaps and bathed his hands in them; then he counted them and set them up in regular piles; and felt their rounded outline between his thumb and fingers, and thought fondly of the guineas that were only half-earned by the work in his loom, as if they had been unborn children—thought of the guineas that were coming slowly, through the coming years, through all his life, which spread far away before him, the end quite hidden by countless days of weaving. No wonder his thoughts were still with his loom and his money when he made his journeys through the fields and the lanes to fetch and carry home his work, so that his steps never wandered to the hedge-banks and the lane-side in search of the once familiar herbs: these too belonged to the past, from which his life had shrunk away, like a rivulet that has sunk far down from the grassy fringe of its old breadth into a little shivering thread, that cuts a groove for itself in the barren sand.

—ELIOT: *Silas Marner.*

The weaver had possibly got a lantern, and Dunstan was tired of feeling his way. He was still nearly three-quarters of a mile from home, and the lane was becoming unpleasantly slippery, for the mist was passing into rain. He turned up the bank, not without some fear lest he might miss the right way, since he was not certain whether the light were in front or on the side of the cottage. But he felt the ground before him cautiously with his whip-handle, and at last arrived safely at the door. He knocked loudly, rather enjoying the idea that the old fellow would be frightened at the

sudden noise. He heard no movement in reply: all was silence in the cottage. Was the weaver gone to bed, then? If so, why had he left a light? That was a strange forgetfulness in a miser. Dunstan knocked still more loudly, and, without pausing for a reply, pushed his fingers through the latch-hole, intending to shake the door and pull the latch-string up and down, not doubting that the door was fastened. But, to his surprise, at this double motion the door opened, and he found himself in front of a bright fire, which lit up every corner of the cottage—the bed, the loom, the three chairs, and the table—and showed him that Marner was not there.—*Ibid.*

*Salanio.* Believe me, sir, had I such venture forth,  
 The better part of my affections would  
 Be with my hopes abroad. I should be still  
 Plucking the grass, to know where sits the wind.  
 Peering in maps for ports and piers and roads;  
 And every object that might make me fear  
 Misfortune to my ventures, out of doubt  
 Would make me sad.

—*The Merchant of Venice*, I. i.

*Bassanio.* 'Tis not unknown to you, Antonio,  
 How much I have disabled mine estate,  
 By something showing a more swelling port  
 Than my faint means would grant continuance:  
 Nor do I now make moan to be abridged  
 From such a noble rate; but my chief care  
 Is to come fairly off from the great debts  
 Wherein my time something too prodigal  
 Hath left me gaged. To you, Antonio,  
 I owe the most, in money and in love,  
 And from your love I have a warranty  
 To unburden all my plots and purposes  
 How to get clear of all the debts I owe.

—*Ibid.*, I. i.

*Bassanio.* In my school-days, when I had lost one shaft,  
I shot his fellow of the self-same flight  
The self-same way with more advised watch,  
To find the other forth, and by adventuring both  
I oft found both: I urge this childhood proof,  
Because what follows is pure innocence.  
I owe you much, and, like a wilful youth,  
That which I owe is lost; but if you please  
To shoot another arrow that self way  
Which you did shoot the first, I do not doubt,  
As I will watch the aim, or to find both  
Or bring your latter hazard back again  
And thankfully rest debtor for the first.

—*Ibid.*, I, i.

*Portia.* If to do were as easy as to know what were  
good to do, chapels had been churches and poor men's  
cottages princes' palaces. It is a good divine that fol-  
lows his own instructions: I can easier teach twenty  
what were good to be done, than be one of the twenty  
to follow mine own teaching. The brain may devise laws  
for the blood, but a hot temper leaps o'er a cold decree:  
such a hare is madness the youth, to skip o'er the meshes  
of good counsel the cripple. But this reasoning is not  
in the fashion to choose me a husband. O me, the word  
"choose"! I may neither choose whom I would nor  
refuse whom I dislike; so is the will of a living daughter  
curbed by the will of a dead father. Is it not hard.  
Nerissa, that I cannot choose one nor refuse none?—  
*Ibid.*, I, ii.

*Portia.* for my own part,  
I have toward heaven breathed a secret vow  
To live in prayer and contemplation.  
Only attended by Nerissa here,  
Until her husband and my lord's return.

—*Ibid.*, III, iv.

*Portia.* The crow doth sing as sweetly as the lark  
 When neither is attended, and I think  
 The nightingale, if she should sing by day,  
 When every goose is cackling, would be thought  
 No better a musician than the wren.  
 How many things by season season'd are  
 To their right praise and true perfection!

—*Ibid.*, V, i.

*Marullus.* Wherefore rejoice? What conquest brings  
 he home?

What tributaries follow him to Rome,  
 To grace in captive bonds his chariot wheels?  
 You blocks, you stones, you worse than senseless things!  
 O you hard hearts, you cruel men of Rome,  
 Knew you not Pompey? Many a time and oft  
 Have you climb'd up to walls and battlements,  
 To towers and windows, yea, to chimney-tops,  
 Your infants in your arms, and there have sat  
 The livelong day, with patient expectation,  
 To see great Pompey pass the streets of Rome:  
 And when you saw his chariot but appear,  
 Have you not made an universal shout,  
 That Tiber trembled underneath her banks,  
 To hear the replication of your sounds  
 Made in her concave shores?  
 And do you now put on your best attire?  
 And do you now cull out a holiday?  
 And do you now strew flowers in his way  
 That comes in triumph over Pompey's blood?  
 Begone!  
 Run to your houses, fall upon your knees,  
 Pray to the gods to intermit the plague  
 That needs must light on this ingratitude.

—*Julius Caesar*, I, i.

*Cassius.* I know that virtue to be in you, Brutus,  
 As well as I do know your outward favor.  
 Well, honor is the subject of my story.  
 I cannot tell what you and other men  
 Think of this life; but, for my single self,  
 I had as lief not be as live to be  
 In awe of such a thing as I myself.

—*Ibid.*, I, ii.

*Cassius.* I know where I will wear this dagger then;  
 Cassius from bondage will deliver Cassius.

—*Ibid.*, I, iii.

*Caesar.* What say the augurers?

*Servant.* They would not have you to stir forth today.  
 Plucking the entrails of an offering forth,  
 They could not find a heart within the beast.

*Caesar.* The gods do this in shame of cowardice;  
 Caesar would be a beast without a heart,  
 If he should stay at home today for fear.  
 No, Caesar shall not: danger knows full well  
 That Caesar is more dangerous than he:  
 We are two lions litter'd in one day,  
 And I the elder and more terrible:  
 And Caesar shall go forth.

—*Ibid.*, II, ii.

*Ligarius.* What's to do?

*Brutus.* A piece of work that will make sick men whole.

*Ligarius.* But are not some whole that we must make  
 sick?

—*Ibid.*, II, ii.

*Brutus.* Our hearts you see not; they are pitiful;  
 And pity to the general wrong of Rome—  
 As fire drives out fire, so pity pity—  
 Hath done this deed on Caesar.

—*Ibid.*, III, i.

We have taken our first step in reading. What have you learned? What have you gained? Do you think you can ever go back to those loose, careless habits that marked your reading in the past? And, more interesting than anything else, the process we have discovered is after all not artificial but merely a natural process that we have been neglecting.

But why, then, if grouping is natural and not mechanical, is there need to call the student's attention to it? Because most of us have become so familiar with type, and so careless in our reading, that we rush on, getting from the text sometimes no meaning, sometimes but part of it, and frequently the wrong meaning. Nothing will do more to correct bad habits of reading than careful grouping. Even though this process seems at first to be mechanical, we soon find that it is not so: it merely emphasizes very strikingly a habit to which we have become so accustomed in our *careful reading* that we are unconscious of it.

At the beginning the grouping process seems to be unnecessarily slow. It is so easy to read a page a minute that it looks like a great waste of time to go slowly, group by group; but there is no other way to master the content of the printed page. An author can give you his thought or picture only through groups, and these groups, long or short, must be gathered together and built up again into the ideas and pictures he had in mind.

And in time, so expert does the careful grouper become, that he reads more and more rapidly and gets more from the printed page *at a first reading* than many untrained readers get in a great many.

## CHAPTER II

### GROUP SEQUENCE

Read aloud the following sentences:

1. They were talking very merrily about the General and Hugh and their friend Mills.
2. They were talking very merrily about the General and Hugh and their friend Mills, and were discussing some romantic plan for the recapture of their horses.
3. They were talking very merrily about the General and Hugh and their friend Mills, and were discussing some romantic plan for the recapture of their horses from the enemy.
4. They were talking very merrily about the General and Hugh and their friend Mills, and were discussing some romantic plan for the recapture of their horses from the enemy, when they came out of the path into a road.
5. They were talking very merrily about the General and Hugh and their friend Mills, and were discussing some romantic plan for the recapture of their horses from the enemy, when they came out of the path into a road, and found themselves within twenty yards of a group of Federal soldiers.
6. They were talking very merrily about the General and Hugh and their friend Mills, and were discussing some romantic plan for the recapture of their horses from the enemy, when they came out of the path into a road, and found themselves within twenty yards of a group of Federal soldiers, quietly sitting on their horses.

7. They were talking very merrily about the General and Hugh and their friend Mills, and were discussing some romantic plan for the recapture of their horses from the enemy, when they came out of the path into a road, and found themselves within twenty yards of a group of Federal soldiers, quietly sitting on their horses, evidently guarding the road.

You observe, sentence 1 presents a complete idea, but in every succeeding sentence something is added, something of great importance, without which we should not get the full meaning. Each sentence standing alone makes complete sense, and yet sentence 1 when repeated in 2 is not complete without the added idea of 2. The same principle applies in 3, where two ideas are added to the first sentence, and one to the second; and so on to the end. Hence, in reading the last sentence the mind keeps looking on from group to group, until the entire story is finished. In other words, our minds continually reach forward for the *complete* thought—for what the author wanted us to see. Briefly, he saw some people who, while talking and discussing a plan, came to a road and found themselves near soldiers, sitting on their horses, guarding the road.

You have not found this illustration difficult to understand; but you have learned from it an important principle: Group Sequence.

Long years of careless reading have resulted in what we may call mental laziness. We read along (we are speaking now of silent reading), getting an idea here and an idea there, but making no *conscious effort*

to get the complete idea. And this explains why in reading aloud we so frequently chop up our sentences regardless of sense, just as the young child learning to read reads every group as if it were his last. He says:

I saw a      and a      on the      f  
 c      d      s      i  
 a      o      t      g  
 t      g      r      h  
                e      t  
                e      i  
                t      n  
                     g;

but when he gets the whole thought he reads:

f  
 t      i  
           e      g  
           e      h  
 t      g      r      t  
 a      o      t      i  
 c      d      s      n  
 I saw a      and a      on the      g.

Now with this principle in mind, read aloud sentence 7 in such a way that the listener will be virtually compelled to keep looking forward to the end.

Again we have used a very simple example to illustrate an important principle; now we will study a more difficult selection:

The mother hen's cluck, when the chicken happened to be hidden in the long grass or under the squash-leaves; her gentle croak of satisfaction, while sure of it beneath her wing; her note of ill-concealed fear and

obstreperous defiance, when she saw her arch-enemy, a neighbor's cat, on top of the high fence;—one or other of these sounds was to be heard at almost every moment of the day.—HAWTHORNE: *The House of the Seven Gables*.

As you read this silently you find yourself constantly looking forward for the assertion—for the word that describes the action—for the verb. When you read aloud carefully you will keep the listener looking forward, waiting for the complete assertion or picture, just as you did when reading to yourself; so that his mind, following you closely, sums it up about like this: The mother hen's cluck, etc.; her gentle croak, etc.; her note of fear, etc., was to be heard every moment of the day.

In poetry Group Sequence is even more interesting than in prose. For instance, in the opening lines of Longfellow's *Paul Revere's Ride* we have:

Listen, my children, and you shall hear  
Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere,  
On the eighteenth of April, in Seventy-five.

Here is a temptation to close the thought after "Revere" because the lines make a complete statement: but on reading the next line you find that it expresses an idea which must be included with the statement in the first two, so it is positively wrong to close the sense at "Revere." Test it for yourself by reading it both ways:

Listen, my children, and you shall hear  
Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere,  
On the eighteenth of April, in Seventy-five;

Apply this principle in the next stanza from the same poem:

He said to his friend, "If the British march  
By land or sea from the town tonight,  
Hang a lantern aloft in the belfry arch  
Of the North Church tower as a signal light,—  
One, if by land, and two, if by sea;  
And I on the opposite shore will be,  
Ready to ride and spread the alarm  
Through every Middlesex village and farm,  
For the country to be up and to arm."

Read aloud the passages, closing the sense whenever there is a temptation to do so; and then read them correctly, noting the difference in the two readings. There are many catches in this excerpt. The careless reader, *ignoring the fact that there is no punctuation after "arch,"* closes his statement at that point; but as he reads on he discovers that he needs the entire following line for its completion. Then he continues at the sixth line and closes the statement at "be," until, on reading the next line, he finds that it is closely connected with the preceding; and if he is not very careful he will find himself slipping in a similar way at "alarm," and "farm."

We have a very instructive example in these lines from Tennyson's *Lancelot and Elaine*. The fair Elaine is dead, and is being borne on her bier by two brothers to the barge that is to carry her body to Camelot. How beautiful is the effect of the suspended sense! Even in "Sister, farewell for ever" and "Farewell, sweet sister" (where there is great

temptation to read the lines as the brothers would have said them—as finished speeches), Tennyson's purpose is not to emphasize them (*the very structure shows that*) but to include them merely as a detail among many others.

So those two brethren from the chariot took  
And on the black decks laid her in her bed,  
Set in her hand a lily, o'er her hung  
The silken case with braided blazonings,  
And kiss'd her quiet brows, and saying to her  
"Sister, farewell for ever," and again  
"Farewell, sweet sister," parted all in tears.

From this study we should learn to be on our guard against closing the sense at the end of a line, particularly in poetry. While we do not look to the punctuation mark to indicate the complete sense, nevertheless the *absence of a mark of punctuation should instantly stimulate us to throw the eye and mind forward*, for surely the sense cannot be complete when there is no punctuation mark. But whether there is a punctuation mark (comma and semicolon particularly) or not, *we must train the mind to look forward at the end of a line*, in order to be certain that we do not miss the meaning.

Here are some good examples of poetic lines at the end of which the sense *seems to be complete*, but where (as in some of the lines we studied in *Paul Revere*) the absence of marks of punctuation should suggest at once to the student that he must go on to the next line for the complete idea.

"Hush child! Your brother Johnny  
Meant to give you a fright."

"Mother, he'll go,—I tell you I know  
He's listed into the fight."

—ALICE CARY: *The Young Soldier*.

Here's a hand to the boy who has courage  
To do what he knows to be right;  
When he falls in the way of temptation  
He has a hard battle to fight.

—PHOEBE CARY: *Our Heroes*.

And soon that toil shall end;  
Soon shalt thou find a home, and rest  
And scream among thy fellows.

—BRYANT: *To a Waterfowl*.

(Here a careless reader will, on a first reading, make  
"rest" a noun.)

The castle alone in the landscape lay  
Like an outpost of winter.

—LOWELL: *The Vision of Sir Launfal*.

And here are some passages where the sense seems  
complete at a comma, and yet, as in the other excerpts,  
we don't get the picture until we read on.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,  
An abbot on an ambling pad,  
Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,  
Or long-hair'd page in crimson clad,  
Goes by to tower'd Camelot.

—TENNYSON: *The Lady of Shalott*.

'Mid shouts that hailed her from the shore  
And bade her speed, the bark is gone,  
The dreary ocean to explore  
Whose waters sweep the frigid zone;—

And bounding on before the gale  
 To bright eyes shining through their tears  
 'Twixt sea and sky, her snowy sail  
 A lessening spark appears.

—JOHN MALCOLM: *The Northwester.*

Long ago,  
 In the deer-haunted forests of Maine,  
 When upon mountain and plain  
 Lay the snow,  
 They fell,—those lordly pines!  
 Those grand, majestic pines!  
 'Mid shouts and cheers  
 The jaded steers,  
 Panting beneath the goad,  
 Dragged down the weary, winding road  
 Those captive Kings so straight and tall,  
 To be shorn of their streaming hair,  
 And, naked and bare,  
 To feel the stress and the strain  
 Of the wind and the reeling main,  
 Whose roar  
 Would remind them for evermore  
 Of their native forests they should not see again.

—LONGFELLOW: *The Building of the Ship.*

Since semicolons, colons, and exclamation points frequently indicate more or less complete sense (which manifests itself in a falling inflection), the following passages are inserted to show the student that he cannot rely mechanically on the punctuation marks as a guide to vocal expression.

As, when the air is serene in the sultry solstice of summer,  
 Suddenly gathers a storm, and the deadly sling of the hailstones

Beats down the farmer's corn in the field and shatters  
his windows,  
Hiding the sun, and strewing the ground with thatch  
from the house roofs,  
Bellowing fly the herds, and seek to break their en-  
closures;  
So on the hearts of the people descended the words of  
the speaker.

—LONGFELLOW: *Evangeline*.

From doubt, where all is double:  
Where wise men are not strong:  
Where comfort turns to trouble:  
Where just men suffer wrong:  
Where sorrow treads on joy:  
Where sweet things soonest cloy:  
Where faiths are built on dust:  
Where love is half mistrust,  
Hungry, and barren, and sharp as the sea:  
Oh, set us free.

Green little vaulter in the sunny grass,  
Catching your heart up at the feel of June,  
Sole voice that's heard amidst the lazy noon,  
When even the bees lag at the summoning brass;  
And you, warm little housekeeper, who class  
With those who think the candles come too soon,  
Loving the fire, and with your tricksome tune  
Nick the glad, silent moments as they pass;  
O sweet and tiny cousins, that belong  
One to the fields, the other to the hearth,  
Both have your sunshine; both, though small, are strong  
At your clear hearts; and both seem given to earth  
To ring in thoughtful ears this natural song—  
In doors and out, summer and winter, Mirth.

—HUNT: *To the Grasshopper and the Cricket*.

Ye Stars, which, though unseen, yet with me gaze  
 Upon this loveliest fragment of the earth!  
 Thou Sun, that kindlest all thy gentlest rays  
 Above it, as to light a favorite hearth!  
 Ye Clouds, that in your temples in the west  
 See nothing brighter than its humblest flowers!  
 And you, ye Winds, that on the ocean's breast  
 Are kissed to coolness ere ye reach its bowers!  
 Bear witness with me in my song of praise,  
 And tell the world that, since the world began,  
 No fairer land hath fired a poet's lays,  
 Or given a home to man!

—TIMROD: *The Cotton Boll*.

(Here the exclamation points suggest emotion, but do not indicate that the sense is complete.)

In similes we find large opportunity to apply our knowledge of Sequence. Generally similes begin with an “as” clause, and end with a “so” clause. When they are long it is helpful to bear this fact in mind, otherwise one is likely to become confused. You must never forget, then, that a simile has two parts and is never complete until you get both.

And as a hungry lion who has made  
 A prey of some large beast—a hornèd stag  
 Or mountain goat—rejoices, and with speed  
 Devours it, though swift hounds and sturdy youths  
 Press on his flank, so Menelaus felt  
 Great joy when Paris, of the godlike form,  
 Appeared in sight, for now he thought to wreak  
 His vengeance on the guilty one, and straight  
 Sprang from his car to earth with all his arms.

—*The Iliad* (Bryant's translation).

As on a herd of beeves a lion springs  
While midst the shrubs they browse, and breaks their  
necks,—

Heifer or ox,—so sprang he on the twain  
And struck them, vainly struggling, from their car,  
And spoiled them of their arms, and took their steeds,  
And bade his comrades lead them to the fleet.

—*Ibid.*

As a lion who has leaped  
Into a fold—and he who guards the flock  
Has wounded but not slain him—feels his rage  
Waked by the blow;—the affrighted shepherd then  
Ventures not near, but hides within the stalls,  
And the forsaken sheep are put to flight,  
And, huddling, slain in heaps, till o'er the fence  
The savage bounds into the fields again;—  
Such was Tydides midst the sons of Troy.

—*Ibid.*

And as when some courser, fed  
With barley in the stall, and wont to bathe  
In some smooth-flowing river, having snapped  
His halter, gayly scampers o'er the plain,  
And in the pride of beauty bears aloft  
His head, and gives his tossing mane to stream  
Upon his shoulders, while his flying feet  
Bear him to where the mares are wont to graze,—  
So came the son of Priam—Paris—down  
From lofty Pergamus in glittering arms,  
And, glorious as the sun, held on his way  
Exulting and with rapid feet.

—*Ibid.*

But as a troop of peddlers from Cabool,  
Cross underneath the Indian Caucasus,  
The vast sky-neighboring mountain of milk snow;  
Crossing so high, that, as they mount, they pass

Long flocks of traveling birds dead on the snow,  
 Slake their parch'd throats with sugar'd mulber-  
 ries—

In single file they move and stop their breath,  
 For fear they should dislodge the o'erhanging  
 snows—

So the pale Persians held their breath with fear.

—ARNOLD: *Sohrab and Rustum.*

And dear as the wet diver to the eyes  
 Of his pale wife who waits and weeps on shore,  
 By sandy Bahrein, in the Persian Gulf,  
 Plunging all day in the blue waves, at night,  
 Having made up his tale of precious pearls,  
 Rejoins her in their hut upon the sands—  
 So dear to the pale Persians Rustum came.

—*Ibid.*

And as afield the reapers cut a swath  
 Down through the middle of a rich man's corn,  
 And on each side are squares of standing corn,  
 And in the midst a stubble, short and bare—  
 So on each side were squares of men, with spears  
 Bristling, and in the midst, the open sand.  
 And Rustum came upon the sand, and cast  
 His eyes toward the Tartar tents, and saw  
 Sohrab come forth, and eyed him as he came.

As some rich woman, on a winter's morn,  
 Eyes through her silken curtains the poor drudge  
 Who with numb blacken'd fingers makes her fire—  
 At cock-crow, on a starlit winter's morn,  
 When the frost flowers the whiten'd windowpanes—  
 And wonders how she lives, and what the thoughts  
 Of that poor drudge may be; so Rustum eyed  
 The unknown adventurous youth, who from afar  
 Came seeking Rustum, and defying forth  
 All the most valiant chiefs.

—*Ibid.*

And he saw that youth,  
Of age and looks to be his own dear son,  
Piteous and lovely, lying on the sand,  
Like some rich hyacinth which by the scythe  
Of an unskillful gardener has been cut,  
Mowing the garden grassplots near its bed,  
And lies, a fragrant tower of purple bloom,  
On the mown, dying grass—so Sohrab lay,  
Lovely in death, upon the common sand.

—*Ibid.*

(Considerable care will be necessary in reading the last extract aloud. You must make the listener understand, beyond any possibility of missing it, that it is the lion that feels; that after “blow” the mind supplies “and”; and before “slain,” “are.”)

Easy to understand as is the principle of Group Sequence, it has taught us a most important lesson: and that is that groups combine in large and larger groups and series until thought or picture is complete. The inattentive student reads more or less choppily, as was pointed out at the beginning of this chapter, and if the sentence is of considerable length he forgets the beginning of it before he gets to the end; and when he reads aloud, this choppiness manifests itself in falling inflections at the end of almost every group. And the worst of it is not merely that the vocal expression is faulty and the listener confused, but that the poor reading is a sure sign of the reader’s failure to grasp the meaning.

At this point, however, the student must be warned that while the thought is often incomplete at a comma, a semicolon, or even at a colon, it does not follow that

it may not be complete at such points. Each case must be decided for itself and, fortunately, the decision is not hard to make. We found that punctuation does not necessarily determine grouping, and here, again, we learn that it does not necessarily determine continuity, or Group Sequence. Let me illustrate. A parent gives his child a lot of presents on Christmas Day, and speaking of them says: "I gave my child picture books, candies, a hobby horse, a drum, and a gun"; while the child, with great interest in each one of the separate gifts, thinks of them one at a time. Now what will be the difference (apart from the feeling) in the way the father and the child enumerate the gifts? Does not the father regard all gifts as one gift: and does not the child regard each gift by itself? Read the list of presents as the father would, and then as the child (the child beginning his enumeration with "I got"), and note the difference. And yet, so far as the punctuation is concerned, the speeches would be printed exactly alike.

This same principle is beautifully exemplified in a little poem. Two young women have returned from a holiday in the country, and they are asked what they have seen.

The one with yawning made reply:

"What have we seen?—Not much have I!

Trees, meadows, mountains, groves, and streams,  
Blue sky and clouds, and sunny gleams."

The other, smiling, said the same;

But with face transfigured and eye of flame:

"Trees, meadows, mountains, groves, and streams!  
Blue sky and clouds, and sunny gleams."

The first girl saw several things, no one of which held her attention, so that in her reply she threw them all together; while to the other girl each aspect of the picture was so important that for the moment it held her attention to the exclusion of everything else. It was as if she were saying "I saw grand old trees. I saw beautiful meadows. I saw majestic mountains," etc. So again you see that the commas are used for grammatical purposes only. When you get the meaning (again, just as in Grouping) you pay no further attention to the punctuation.

### EXERCISES

He had completely lost his voice the following winter, and had ever since been little better than a cracked fiddle, which is good for nothing but firewood.—ELIOT: *Mr. Gilfil's Love-Story*.

Then, just after their third child was born, fever came, swept away the sickly mother and the two eldest children, and attacked Sarti himself, who rose from his sick-bed with enfeebled brain and muscle, and a tiny baby on his hands, scarcely four months old.—*Ibid.*

Even Mrs. Sharp had been so smitten with pity by the scene she had witnessed, as to shed a small tear, though she was not at all subject to that weakness; indeed, she abstained from it on principle, because, as she often said, it was known to be the worst thing in the world for the eyes.—*Ibid.*

He had only a hundred seamen to work the ship and to fight,

And he sailed away from Flores till the Spaniard came in sight,

With his huge sea-castles heaving upon the weather bow.  
 "Shall we fight or shall we fly?  
 Good Sir Richard, tell us now,  
 For to fight is but to die!  
 There'll be little of us left by the time this sun be set."  
 And Sir Richard said again: "We be all good English  
 men.  
 Let us bang these dogs of Seville, the children of the  
 devil,  
 For I never turn'd my back upon Don or devil yet."  
 —TENNYSON: *The Revenge.*

Sir Richard spoke and he laugh'd, and we roar'd a hur-  
 rah, and so  
 The little Revenge ran on sheer into the heart of the foe,  
 With her hundred fighters on deck, and her ninety sick  
 below.

—*Ibid.*

And the rest they came aboard us, and they fought us  
 hand to hand,  
 For a dozen times they came with their pikes and mus-  
 queeters,  
 And a dozen times we shook 'em off as a dog that  
 shakes his ears  
 When he leaps from the water to the land.

—*Ibid.*

The next illustration is from *The Merchant of Venice*, where Shylock gives his reasons for hating Antonio:

*Salarino.* Why, I am sure, if he forfeit, thou wilt  
 not take his flesh: what's that good for?

*Shylock.* To bait fish withal: if it will feed nothing  
 else, it will feed my revenge. He hath disgraced me,  
 and hindered me half a million; laughed at my losses,

mocked at my gains, scorned my nation, thwarted my bargains, cooled my friends, heated mine enemies; and what's his reason? I am a Jew.

Now, if you were running over these reasons rapidly, you would say that Shylock hated Antonio because Antonio had laughed at his losses, mocked at his gains, scorned his nation, thwarted his bargains, cooled his friends, heated his enemies—merely enumerating the causes. But to Shylock each offense in itself was enough to justify revenge. It makes no difference how rapidly his passion would hurry him along; each point in his charge against Antonio is complete in itself. Perhaps Shylock's mental attitude will be made clearer by printing his speech thus:

I hate him because he laughed at my losses. I hate him because he mocked at my gains. I hate him because he scorned my nation. I hate him because he thwarted my bargains. I hate him because he cooled my friends. I hate him because he heated mine enemies.

It is possible to conceive of this sentence being made up of a series of contrasts equivalent to

He laughed at my losses and mocked at my gains; scorned my nation and thwarted my bargains; cooled my friends and heated mine enemies;

but I don't think that this is as good an interpretation as the former. In any case there is closure at "gains" and at "bargains"; and if you see that, you have learned the lesson I wanted to teach you.

I take a final example from Shakespeare's *Henry V*. The King is urging his soldiers on to a final assault

against the walls of Harfleur, which have been offering stout resistance. He says:

imitate the action of the tiger;  
Stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood,  
Disguise fair nature with hard-favored rage;  
Then lend the eye a terrible aspect;  
Let it pry through the portage of the head  
Like the brass cannon.

Each sentence is a complete assertion, and even the second line contains two distinct and independent commands. If, however, you were telling someone in an offhand way what commands Henry gave to his soldiers you would be more than likely not to consider each group as a finished command but as a part of one idea, and would say "he told them to imitate the action of the tiger, to stiffen the sinews, to summon up the blood," etc.

To summarize: We cannot lay down any absolute rule, but the principle is not difficult to understand. In our silent reading we go on and on until the sense is finished, and the voice, as we read aloud, *instinctively responds to the action of the mind*; but on the other hand, the thought may be complete at any part of the sentence, regardless of the punctuation.

#### REVIEW EXERCISES

Turn back to the poem *The Sea* and you will find it offers many opportunities to test your knowledge of Group Sequence. In every stanza there are deci-

sions to be made; a few of the most important are found in the third and fourth stanzas.

No mate, no comrade Lucy knew;  
She dwelt on a wide moor,  
—The sweetest thing that ever grew  
Beside a human door!

—WORDSWORTH: *Lucy Gray*.

I know it is a sin  
For me to sit and grin  
At him here;  
But the old three-cornered hat,  
And the breeches, and all that,  
Are so queer!

—HOLMES: *The Last Leaf*.

Oh may I join the choir invisible  
Of those immortal dead who live again  
In minds made better by their presence.

—ELIOT: *The Choir Invisible*.

Old Tubal Cain was a man of might  
In the days when earth was young;  
By the fierce red light of his furnace bright  
The stroke of his hammer rung;  
And he lifted high his brawny hand  
On the iron glowing clear,  
Till the sparks rushed out in scarlet showers  
As he fashioned the sword and spear.  
And he sang,—“Hurrah for my handiwork!  
Hurrah for the Spear and Sword!  
Hurrah for the hand that shall wield them well,  
For he shall be king and lord!”

—MACKAY: *Tubal Cain*.

Aeneas, with his shield  
 And his long spear, leaped down to guard the slain,  
 That the Achaians might not drag him thence.  
 There, lion-like, confiding in his strength,  
 He stalked around the corpse, and over it  
 Held his round shield and lance, prepared to slay  
 Whoever came, and shouting terribly.

—*The Iliad* (Bryant's translation).

When thoughts  
 Of the last bitter hour come like a blight  
 Over thy spirit, and sad images  
 Of the stern agony, and shroud, and pall,  
 And breathless darkness, and the narrow house,  
 Make thee to shudder and grow sick at heart,—  
 Go forth under the open sky, and list  
 To Nature's teachings.

—BRYANT: *Thanatopsis*.

Noiselessly as the daylight comes, when the night is  
 done,  
 And the crimson streak on ocean's cheek grows into the  
 great sun,—  
 Noiselessly as the springtime her crown of verdure  
 weaves,  
 And all the trees on all the hills open their thousand  
 leaves,—  
 So, without sound of music or voice of them that wept,  
 Silently down from the mountain crown the great pro-  
 cession swept.

—MRS. C. F. ALEXANDER: *The Burial of Moses*.

For a long while he used to console himself, when  
 driven from home, by frequenting a kind of perpetual  
 club of the sages, philosophers, and other idle person-  
 ages of the village, which held its sessions on a bench  
 before a small inn, designated by a rubicund portrait of

his majesty George the Third.—IRVING: *Rip Van Winkle.*

Rip was equally at a loss to comprehend the question; when a knowing, self-important old gentleman, in a sharp cocked hat, made his way through the crowd, putting them to the right and left with his elbows as he passed, and planting himself before Van Winkle, with one arm akimbo, the other resting on his eane, his keen eyes and sharp hat penetrating, as it were, into his very soul, demanded, in an austere tone, "what brought him to the election with a gun on his shoulder, and a mob at his heels, and whether he meant to breed riot in the village?"—*Ibid.*

He listened greedily to the thousand details of a farmer's labors, the autumn sowing, the winter work, the splendid feasts of harvest home and vintage, the flails beating the floor, the sound of the mills by the edge of the water, the tired horses led to the trough, the morning hunting in the mists, and above all, the long evenings around the fire, shortened by tales of marvel.—COPPEE: *The Substitute.*

(Note the closure at "labors.")

When Mrs. Durgan, widow of the late Sir John Durgan, arrived in their station, and after a short time had been proposed to by every single man at mess, she put the public sentiment very neatly when she explained that they were all so nice that unless she could marry them all, including the colonel and some majors who were already married, she was not going to content herself with one of them.—KIPLING: *The Man Who Was.*

Silas' hand satisfied itself with throwing the shuttle, and his eye with seeing the little squares in the cloth complete themselves under his effort. Then there were the calls of hunger: and Silas, in his solitude, had to

provide his own breakfast, dinner, and supper; and all these immediate promptings helped, along with the weaving, to reduce his life to the unquestioning activity of a spinning insect. He hated the thought of the past; there was nothing that called out his love and fellowship towards the strangers he had come amongst; and the future was all dark, for there was no unseen Love that cared for him.—GEORGE ELIOT: *Silas Marner*.

(a. It seems best to regard the thought as incomplete at "past" and "amongst." Why? b. How will you group "breakfast, dinner, and supper"?)

They fought the dogs and killed the cats,  
And bit the babies in the cradles,  
And ate the cheese out of the vats,  
And licked the soup from the cooks' own ladles,  
Split open the kegs of salted sprats,  
Made nests inside men's Sunday hats,  
And even spoiled the women's chats  
By drowning their speaking  
With shrieking and squeaking  
In fifty different sharps and flats.

And the muttering grew to a grumbling;  
And the grumbling grew to a mighty rumbling;  
And out of the houses the rats came tumbling—  
Great rats, small rats, lean rats, brawny rats,  
Brown rats, black rats, lean rats, brawny rats,  
Brothers, sisters, husbands, wives  
Followed the Piper for their lives.

Out came the children running:  
All the little boys and girls,  
With rosy cheeks and flaxen curls,  
And sparkling eyes and teeth like pearls,  
Tripping and skipping, ran merrily after  
The wonderful music with shouting and laughter.

The Mayor was dumb, and the Council stood  
As if they were changed into blocks of wood,  
Unable to move a step or cry  
To the children merrily skipping by—  
And could only follow with the eye  
That joyous crowd at the Piper's back.  
The Mayor sent east, west, north, and south  
To offer the Piper by word of mouth,  
Wherever it was man's lot to find him,  
Silver and gold to his heart's content,  
If he'd only return the way he went,  
And bring the children behind him.

—BROWNING: *The Pied Piper of Hamelin.*

(Nothing in the text of the first paragraph demands a rise or a fall of the voice at the end of each of the first six lines. So long as you have a *reason* you can use either; but after the sixth line there is no choice.)

I prefer—though I don't insist that you should—to keep the sense open at the end of lines 11 and 12, but I think it is almost imperative to close it at "tumbling." But what will you do with all the "rats" and, particularly, why? And suppose you decide to close on the "rats," be careful of "wives." Further, there are interesting catches in many other lines, where you will have opportunity to test your knowledge of closure at commas; for instance, line 24, at "dumb"; line 25, at "wood."

But remember, finally, that while it is all a question of interpretation, there must be a reason for all you do.)

# CHAPTER III

## GROUP VALUES

### SUBORDINATION

Here on this beach a hundred years ago,  
Three children of three houses, Annie Lee,  
The prettiest little damsel in the port,  
And Phillip Ray, the miller's only son,  
And Enoch Arden, a rough sailor's lad,  
Made orphan by a winter shipwreck, play'd  
Among the waste and lumber of the shore.

—TENNYSON: *Enoch Arden.*

If we omit from the above lines all but the main idea, the sentence reads:

In other words, the most important features of the picture are the three children playing on the shore. Let us now insert their names, and we have:

Here on this beach a hundred years ago,  
Three children of three houses, Annie Lee,  
And Phillip Ray, . . . . .  
And Enoch Arden, . . . . . play'd  
Among the waste and lumber of the shore.

You observe that the names "Annie Lee," "Phillip Ray," and "Enoch Arden" are explanatory of the group "three children of three houses." They are, therefore, subordinate to the main idea; they are for the moment of secondary value. The author, after giving us the names of each of the children, adds another subordinate group of explanation: Annie Lee is the prettiest little damsel in the port; Phillip Ray is the miller's only son; and Enoch Arden is the rough sailor's lad, made orphan by a winter's shipwreck. Here, then, are groups of three distinct values, or degrees of importance. The most important is the statement that a hundred years ago three children played on the shore; the next important group gives the name of each child; and the least important gives the description of each child. The entire sentence might be printed as on p. 74.

If all sentences were printed as we have printed the one from *Enoch Arden* we should have little trouble with subordinate values; but since they are not, we must train ourselves to recognize different degrees of thought values as they appear in the ordinary way in type. All type looks alike, one might say; the most important word or group has no greater prominence than the least necessary; and for this reason we must be the more careful in studying the printed page.

What adds to the difficulty is that the sentence becomes longer as subordinate groups are added, and the strain of concentration becomes greater and greater as (1) the subordinate group gets longer; or as (2) there is more than one successive subordinate group:

Here on this beach a hundred years ago,

Three children of three houses, . . . . . play'd

Annie Lee, . . . . . and Phillip Ray, . . . . . and Enoch Arden, . . . . .  
The prettiest . . . . port, The miller's only son, A rough . . . . shlpwreck,

Among the waste and lumber of the shore.

If you read this aloud and try to make clear to your listener the picture as you now see it, you will notice that your voice, without any effort on your part, brings out the different degrees of subordination.

or as (3) there are groups which themselves are subordinate to other subordinate groups.

In the passage from *Enoch Arden* were found illustrations of all three phases of the problem. First, the subordinate main group, from "Annie Lee" to "sailor's lad," is very long; secondly, "Annie Lee," "Phillip Ray," and "Enoch Arden" are subordinate to "children"; and, thirdly, each of these subordinate nouns is followed by another subordinate group.

Now, when it comes to reading this sentence aloud you must keep in mind continually the main idea and strive to make the listener see it, and you may be certain the vocal expression will take care of itself. All our lives we have been expressing subordinate ideas with little or no thought of what the voice was doing, and if you will get the thought, make it your very own, and read it aloud as though it were your own, you may be confident the vocal expression will be adequate. Test this in these fairly simple passages:

Mrs. Cratchit left the room alone—too nervous to bear witnesses—to take the pudding up, and bring it in.—DICKENS: *A Christmas Carol*.

In half a minute Mrs. Cratchit entered—flushed but smiling proudly—with the pudding like a speckled cannon ball, so hard and so firm, and bedight with Christmas holly stuck into the top.—*Ibid.*

Alas! (thought I, and my heart beat loud)  
How fast she nears and nears!

Are those her sails that glanee in the Sun,  
Like restless gossameres?

—COLERIDGE: *The Ancient Mariner*.

But the deacon swore, (as deacons do,  
With an "I dew vum," or an "I tell yeou,")  
He would build one shay to beat the taown.

—HOLMES: *The One-Hoss Shay.*

That story which the bold Sir Bedivere,  
First made and latest left of all the knights,  
Told, when the man was no more than a voice  
In the white winter of his age, to those  
With whom he dwelt, new faces, other minds.

—TENNYSON: *The Passing of Arthur.*

Most noble lord, Sir Lancelot of the Lake,  
I, sometimes call'd the maid of Astolat,  
Come, for you left me taking no farewell,  
Hither, to take my last farewell of you.

—TENNYSON: *Lancelot and Elaine.*

I would not enter on my list of friends  
(Though graced with polished manners and fine sense,  
Yet wanting sensibility) the man  
Who needlessly sets foot upon a worm.

—WILLIAM COWPER: *Humanity.*

The smoke of censers, where heaped ambergris  
And myrrh and sandal-wood and cinnamon  
Fragrantly smouldered, through the languid air crept  
upward.

—ARLO BATES: *The Sorrow of Rohab.*

Thus early had that one guest—the only guest who is  
certain, at one time or another, to find his way into  
every human dwelling—thus early had Death stepped  
across the threshold of the House of the Seven Gables!—  
HAWTHORNE: *The House of the Seven Gables.*

At the moment of execution—with the halter about  
his neck and while Col. Pyncheon sat on horseback  
grimly gazing at the scene—Maule had addressed him

from the scaffold, and muttered a prophecy, of which history, as well as fireside tradition, has preserved the very words. "God," said the dying man, pointing his finger, with a ghastly look, at the undismayed countenance of his enemy, "God will give him blood to drink."—*Ibid.*

And she laid the cloth, assisted by Belinda Cratchit, second of her daughters, also brave in ribbons, while Master Peter Cratchit plunged a fork into the saucepan of potatoes, and getting the corners of his monstrous shirt-collar, Bob's private property, conferred upon his son and heir in honor of the day, into his mouth, rejoiced to find himself so gallantly attired, and yearned to show his linen in the fashionable parks.—DICKENS: *A Christmas Carol*.

The office was closed in a twinkling, and the clerk, with the long ends of his white comforter dangling below his waist, for he boasted no great coat, went down a slide on Cornhill, at the end of a lane of boys, twenty times, in honor of its being Christmas Eve, and then ran home to Camden Town as hard as he could pelt, to play at Blindman's buff.—*Ibid.*

He held the theory that "all teachers were servants of the state"; and on this ground ordered her dismissal. This act caused a great commotion; and when it had died down, his theory that "all teachers"—and it made no difference how many years they had been in service—"were servants of the state" became the fixed policy of the board.

He advanced to the council table:  
And, "Please your honors," said he, "I'm able  
By means of a secret charm, to draw  
All creatures living beneath the sun,  
That creep or swim or fly or run,

After me so as you never saw!  
 And I chiefly use my charm  
 On creatures that do people harm,  
 The mole and toad and newt and viper;  
 And people call me the Pied Piper."  
 (And here they noticed round his neck  
 A scarf of red and yellow stripe,  
 To match with his coat of the selfsame check;  
 And at the scarf's end hung a pipe;  
 And his fingers, they noticed, were ever straying  
 As if impatient to be playing  
 Upon this pipe, as low it dangled  
 Over his vesture so old-fangled.)  
 "And as for what your brain bewilders,  
 If I can rid your town of rats,  
 Will you give me a thousand gilders?"

—BROWNING: *The Pied Piper of Hamelin.*

But as the main idea is interrupted by two or three subordinate groups it becomes increasingly difficult to follow the text. We get lost in a maze of words and get but a small part or even none of the meaning. If then you will but keep on the lookout for the main idea as expressed in the subject, the predicate verb, and the object, much if not all of the confusion will disappear.

At Atri in Abruzzo, a small town  
 Of ancient Roman date, but scant renown,  
 One of those little places that have run  
 Half up a hill, beneath a blazing sun,  
 And then sat down to rest, as if to say,  
 "I climb no further upward, come what may,"  
 The Re Giovanni, now unknown to fame,  
 So many monarchs since have borne the name,  
 Had a great bell hung in the market-place.

—LONGFELLOW: *The Bell of Atri.*

In place of this clause the first edition has: "Her figure, her air, her features,—all, in their very minutest development were those—were identically (I can use no other sufficient term), were identically those of Roderick Usher who sat beside me."—*Comment by Prof. Mathews on a passage from Poe.*

The Longfellows from America, Professor Owen, Queen Emma of the Sandwich Islands, the son of the Abyssinian King Theodore, who lost life and kingdom in his war with the English, and Mr. Darwin—to whom Tennyson said, "Your theory of Evolution does not make against Christianity?" and Darwin answered, "No, certainly not"—may be mentioned to exemplify the variety of his visitors.—LYALL: *Alfred Tennyson.*

All the public, the great mass of solid and well-disposed people who had got no deep insight into such matters, were very adverse to it, and the president of it, old Sir Francis Rous, who translated the Psalms—those that we sing every Sunday in the church yet—a very good man and a wise man—the Provost of Eton—he got the minority, or I don't know whether or not he did not persuade the majority—he, at any rate, got a great number of the Parliament to go to Oliver the Dictator.—CARLYLE: *Choice of Books.*

And grossly that man errs, who should suppose  
That the green valleys, and the streams and rocks  
Were things indifferent to the shepherd's thoughts.  
Fields, where with cheerful spirits he had breathed  
The common air; the hills, which he so oft  
Had climbed with vigorous steps; which had impress'd  
So many incidents upon his mind  
Of hardship, skill, or courage, joy, or fear;  
Which like a book preserved the memory  
Of the dumb animals, whom he had saved,  
Had fed or shelter'd linking to such acts,

So grateful in themselves, the certainty  
Of honorable gain; these fields, these hills,  
Which were his living being, even more  
Than his own blood—what could they less? had laid  
Strong hold on his affections, were to him  
A pleasurable feeling of blind love,  
The pleasure which there is in life itself.

—WORDSWORTH: *Michael*.

As a result of this study we may have noted in the reading of the subordinate groups a tendency to accelerate the speed and to lower the pitch of the voice. So general is this tendency that in many of the old text-books on reading (and to some extent even in our modern ones) is to be found a rule that subordinate groups must be read in a lower pitch and faster. But there is great danger in accepting this rule blindly: although it is of very general application it is often seriously misleading; for while a group may be grammatically subordinate, *it may be emotionally, or because of particular importance, of the very greatest value*, and will then certainly not be read “faster and lower.” Again, it is to be emphasized that we do not have to think about the voice: this takes care of itself; but the student’s attention is called to it in order that he may not be led astray by mechanical rules.

The cunning of Mr. Bucket’s eye, and the masterly manner in which he contrived, without a look or word against which his watchful auditor could protest, to let us know that he stated the case according to previous agreement, and could say much more of Mr. Smallmeed if he thought advisable, deprived us of any merit in quite understanding him.—DICKENS: *Bleak House*.

Once upon a time—of all the good days in the year, upon a Christmas eve—old Scrooge sat busy in his counting house. It was cold, bleak, biting, foggy weather; and the city clocks had only just gone three, but it was quite dark already—it had not been light all day—and candles were flaring in the windows of the neighboring offices, like ruddy smears upon the palpable brown air.—DICKENS: *A Christmas Carol*.

The gingham dog and calico cat  
Side by side on the table sat;  
'Twas half-past twelve and (what do you think!)  
Not one nor t'other had slept a wink.

—FIELD: *The Duel*.

Out of the focal and foremost fire,  
Out of the hospital walls as dire;  
Smitten of grapeshot and gangrene,  
(Eighteenth battle, and *he* sixteen!)  
Specter! such as you seldom see,  
Little Giffen of Tennessee!

—TICKNOR: *Little Giffen*.

This is the sword of Damascus I fought with in Flanders; this breastplate, (Well I remember the day!) once saved my life in a skirmish.

—LONGFELLOW: *Miles Standish*.

And straight the Sun was fleck'd with bars,  
(Heaven's Mother send us grace!)  
As if through a dungeon-grate he peer'd  
With broad and burning face.

—COLERIDGE: *The Ancient Mariner*.

I am that man upon whose head  
They fix the price, because I hate  
The Austrians over us: the State

Will give you gold—oh, gold so much!—  
If you betray me to their clutch.

—BROWNING: *The Italian in England.*

We of peaceful London City have never beheld—and please God shall never witness—such a scene of hurry and alarm as that which Brussels presented. All that day, from morning until past sunset, the cannon never ceased to roar. It was dark when the cannonading stopped.—THACKERAY: *Vanity Fair.*

*Queen Kath.*

Sir,

I am about to weep; but, thinking that  
We are a queen, or long have dream'd so, certain,  
The daughter of a king, my drops of tears  
I'll turn to sparks of fire.

—*King Henry VIII*, II, iv.

He went about his work—such work as few  
Ever had laid on head and heart and hand—  
As one who knows, where there's a task to do,  
Man's honest will must Heaven's good grace  
command.

—TAYLOR: *Abraham Lincoln.*

But wasn't it grand,  
When they came down the hill over sloughing and sand?  
But we stood—did we not?—like immovable rock,  
Unheeding their balls and repelling their shock.

—WATSON: *The Wounded Soldier.*

Little fairy snowflakes  
Dancing in the flue;  
Old Mr. Santa Claus,  
What is keeping you?  
Twilight and firelight;  
Shadows come and go;  
Merry chime of sleigh-bells

Tinkling through the snow;  
Mother knitting stockings  
(Pussy's got the ball!)  
Don't you think that Winter's  
Pleasanter than all?

—ALDRICH: *Marjorie's Almanac*.

Thou happy, happy elf!  
(But stop,—first let me kiss away that tear,)  
Thou tiny image of myself!  
(My love, he's poking peas into his ear!)  
Thou merry, laughing sprite!  
With spirits feather-light,  
Untouched by sorrow and unsoled by sin;  
(My dear, the child is swallowing a pin!)  
Thou little tricksy Puck!  
With antic toys so funnily bestuck,  
Light as the singing bird that wings the air—  
(The door! the door! he'll tumble down the stair!)  
Thou darling of thy sire!  
(Why, Jane, he'll set his pinafore afire!)  
Thou imp of mirth and joy!  
In love's dear chain so strong and bright a link,  
Thou idol of thy parents;—(hang the boy!  
There goes my ink!)

—HOOD: *Ode to an Infant Son*.

#### COÖRDINATION

Just as sometimes our reading is ineffective because we do not recognize that some groups are of lesser value than others, so there are careless readers who fail to express the meaning because they consciously or unconsciously subordinate groups that should be of first importance. Here is a test:

Four things a man must learn to do  
If he would make his record true:  
To think without confusion, clearly;  
To love his fellow-men sincerely;  
To act from honest motives purely;  
To trust in God and Heaven securely.

—VAN DYKE: *Four Things*.

Frequently the author wants to emphasize certain ideas, and to do this he uses the same construction in several successive phrases. In *Enoch Arden* Tennyson is describing the awful monotony of the shipwrecked sailor's life. Note how this is done, particularly in the fourth, fifth, and sixth lines, all having the same value. If we fail to appreciate this equivalence we lose something of the meaning, and, naturally, shall fail to communicate it to our audience. If you strive to bring out the full force of these three lines you will notice that the vocal expression is virtually alike in every case.

No sail from day to day, but every day  
The sunrise broken into scarlet shafts  
Among the palms and ferns and precipices;  
The blaze upon the waters to the east;  
The blaze upon his island overhead;  
The blaze upon the waters to the west;  
Then the great stars that globed themselves  
in Heaven,  
The hollower-bellowing ocean, and again  
The scarlet shafts of sunrise—but no sail.

(Observe, too, that the two statements "Then the great stars that globed themselves in Heaven" and

“The hollower-bellowing ocean” are equivalent in thought value.)

In the play of *Julius Caesar* Marcus Brutus believes himself to be the equal of any man, and Cassius knows that if Brutus can be made to feel that Caesar considers himself his superior, Brutus will join the conspiracy to overthrow Caesar. See, then, how Cassius, by using a number of sentences of equal value, drives home this one thought. All his arguments are of equal weight and set forth in the same structure. Therefore, to convey the meaning of Cassius we, too, must express them all in exactly the same way. We must not forget that Shakespeare probably gave no thought as he wrote to the details of vocal expression; nor, of course, would Cassius (supposing these lines of his to be a stenographic record of what the real Cassius said to the real Brutus) be consciously careful to speak the sentences so as to bring out their coördinate value. The truth, however, is that his mind, working as it does, reveals itself in this series of equivalent sentences; and when we perceive this equivalence the voice instinctively responds in equivalence of vocal expression.

*Cassius.* Brutus and Caesar: what should be in that Caesar?

Why should that name be sounded more than yours?  
Write them together, yours is as fair a name;  
Sound them, it doth become the mouth as well;  
Weigh them, it is as heavy; conjure with 'em,  
“Brutus” will start a spirit as soon as “Caesar.”

—*Julius Caesar*, I, ii.

Note the equivalence of value in the subordinate phrases in the next extract. There has just died the abbess of a convent where for some years Queen Guinevere has been dwelling as a simple nun:

Then she, for her good deeds and her pure life,  
 And for the power of ministration in her,  
 And likewise for the high rank she had borne,  
 Was chosen Abbess, there, an Abbess lived  
 For three brief years, and there, an Abbess, past  
 To where beyond these voices there is peace.

—TENNYSON: *Guinevere.*

The three groups:

for her good deeds and her pure life,  
 And for the power of ministration in her,  
 And likewise for the high rank she had borne,

are clearly subordinate to the rest of the sentence, but all have exactly the same thought value. In reading this extract the student must not forget that the principal sentence is "Then she . . . was chosen Abbess," and that, let me repeat, the three phrases we have discussed are subordinate, but all equally so.

*Cassius.* For Cassius is aweary of the world;  
 Hated by one he loves; braved by his brother;  
 Check'd like a bondman; all his faults observed,  
 Set in a note-book, learn'd, and conn'd by rote,  
 To cast into my teeth.

—*Julius Caesar*, IV, iii.

—Then old Fezziwig stood out to dance with Mrs. Fezziwig. Top couple, too; with a good stiff piece of work set out for them; three or four and twenty pair of partners; people who were not to be trifled with; people who would dance and had no notion of walking.

But if there had been twice as many—ah! four times—old Fezziwig would have been enough for them all, and so would Mrs. Fezziwig.—DICKENS: *Christmas Carol*.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,  
An abbot on an ambling pad,  
Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,  
Or long-hair'd page in crimson clad,  
Goes by to tower'd Camelot.

—TENNYSON: *The Lady of Shalott*.

The swain responsive as the milk-maid sung,  
The sober herd that lowed to meet their young,  
The noisy geese that gabbled o'er the pool,  
The playful children just let loose from school,  
The watch-dog's voice that bayed the whispering wind,  
And the loud laugh that spoke the vacant mind;—  
These all in sweet confusion sought the shade,  
And filled each pause the nightingale had made.

—GOLDSMITH: *The Deserted Village*.

The year's at the spring,  
And day's at the morn;  
Morning's at seven;  
The hillside's dew-pearled;  
The lark's on the wing;  
The snail's on the thorn:  
God's in his heaven—  
All's right with the world.

—BROWNING: *Pippa Passes*.

Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.—THE BIBLE.

God give us men! A time like this demands  
 Strong minds, great hearts, true faith, and ready  
 hands;  
 Men whom the lust of office does not kill;  
 Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy;  
 Men who possess opinions and a will;  
 Men who have honor,—men who will not lie;  
 Men who can stand before a demagogue,  
 And damn his treacherous flatteries without  
 winking!  
 Tall men, sun-crowned, who live above the fog  
 In public duty and in private thinking:  
 For while the rabble, with their thumb-worn creeds,  
 Their large professions, and their little deeds,  
 Mingle in selfish strife, lo! Freedom weeps,  
 Wrong rules the land, and waiting Justice sleeps!  
 —HOLLAND: *Wanted—Men.*

#### FIRST VOICE

Men of thought! be up and stirring, night and day:  
 Sow the seed,—withdraw the curtain,—CLEAR THE WAY!

#### SECOND VOICE

Men of action, aid and cheer them, as ye may!  
 There's a fount about to stream,  
 There's a light about to beam,  
 There's a warmth about to glow,  
 There's a flower about to blow;  
 There's a midnight blackness changing into gray.

#### FIRST VOICE

Men of thought and men of action, CLEAR THE WAY!

#### THIRD VOICE

Once the welcome light has broken, who shall say  
 What the unimagined glories of the day?  
 What the evil that shall perish in its ray?

## FOURTH VOICE

Aid the dawning, tongue and pen;  
Aid it, hopes of honest men;  
Aid it, paper; aid it, type;  
Aid it, for the hour is ripe,  
And our earnest must not slacken into play.

## FIRST VOICE

Men of thought and men of action, CLEAR THE WAY!

## SECOND VOICE

Lo! a cloud's about to vanish from the day;  
And a brazen wrong to crumble into clay.  
Lo! the right's about to conquer: CLEAR THE WAY!

## THIRD VOICE

With the right shall many more  
Enter smiling at the door;  
With the giant wrong shall fall  
Many others, great and small,  
That for ages long have held us for their prey.

## ALL

Men of thought and men of action, CLEAR THE WAY!

—MACKAY: *Clear the Way* (arranged).

## CHAPTER IV

### GROUP SEQUENCE WITH SUBORDINATION

The problem of Sequence is often complicated by that of Subordination. It is worth while therefore to devote an entire chapter to studying some passages especially chosen to test your ability in both problems.

Where the subordinate groups are long, or where there are many in succession, there is likely to be confusion in the reader's mind, and to avoid this it is advisable to cut them out temporarily and lay stress on getting the principal idea or statement. When the student has that clearly in mind let him study carefully the subordinate idea or ideas. Then in reading aloud, when he comes to the point in the sentence where the main idea is interrupted by the subordinate one, let him pause an instant and, *keeping in mind the principal sentence so far as it has gone*, read the subordinate idea until he comes again to the main statement, and then finish that without regard to the interruption.

Her fair head, with all  
Its wealth of hair shining and richly brown  
Like melon seeds, its eyes of topaz, lips  
Like twin pomegranate blooms, its cheeks as smooth  
As a flute's note, and all that loveliness

Had caught the heart of Rohab as a snare  
Tangles the falcon in a coil of death,  
Fell, changed to a thing of horror, drenched in blood,  
And beautiful no more.

—ARLO BATES: *The Sorrow of Rohab*.

As the long train  
Of ages glide away, the sons of men,—  
The youth, in life's green spring, and he who goes  
In the full strength of years, matron and maid,  
The speechless babe, and the gray-headed man,—  
Shall one by one be gathered to thy side,  
By those who in their turn shall follow them.

—BRYANT: *Thanatopsis*.

In the above extracts the principal statements are intentionally underlined as indicating a simple plan for students to follow in their own analysis when there is only one degree of subordination. When the main idea is interrupted more than once by subordinate groups the marking is even more helpful.

For artistic reasons Tennyson purposely draws out the simple statement concerning Sir Bedivere watching the departure of the barge which bore the body of the dead king. As you read it hurriedly it is anything but clear, and there are two places where there is much danger of getting the wrong meaning. Read it aloud at sight:

Thereat once more he moved about, and clomb  
Ev'n to the highest he could climb, and saw,  
Straining his eye beneath an arch of hand,  
Or thought he saw, the speck that bare the King,  
Down that long water opening on the deep

Somewhere far off, pass on and on, and go  
From less to less and vanish into light.

—TENNYSON: *The Passing of Arthur.*

Now see how the marking I have suggested helps you to get the right meaning:

Thereat once more he moved about, and clomb  
Ev'n to the highest he could climb, and saw,  
Straining his eye beneath an arch of hand.  
Or thought he saw, the speck that bare the King,  
Down that long water opening on the deep  
Somewhere far off, pass on and on, and go  
From less to less and vanish into light.

One of the most interesting examples I have ever come across is this from *The Book of Esther*. Here certainly, one might say, is a passage so mixed up that nobody can be expected to make head or tail out of it. But study it in the manner I have indicated and all becomes clear. Perhaps the sentence would not have been written in that way in our day, but that is not the question: which is, Can we interpret it as it stands?

Then the king said to the wise men (for so was the king's manner toward all that knew law and judgment; and the next unto him was Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, and Memucan, the seven princes of Persia and Media, which saw the king's face and sat first in the kingdom): What shall we do unto queen Vashti?—*Esther*, I, 13.

Work it out carefully and don't be afraid of those strange looking names of the seven princes. Just pass them over lightly for the present as though they were

English names, William, James, and the like. It may be helpful to diagram the sentence as you have done in your grammar lessons. Then read it aloud—the entire class can do this in concert—as I mark it below:

THEN THE KING SAID TO THE WISE MEN . . . WHAT SHALL WE DO UNTO QUEEN VASHTI?

THEN THE KING SAID TO THE WISE MEN (for so was the king's manner toward all that knew law and judgment; . . .): WHAT SHALL WE DO UNTO QUEEN VASHTI?

THEN THE KING SAID TO THE WISE MEN (for so was the king's manner toward all that knew law and judgment; AND THE NEXT UNTO HIM WAS CARSHENA, SHETHAR, ADMATHA, TARSHISH, MERES, MARSENA, AND MEMUCAN, . . .): WHAT SHALL WE DO UNTO QUEEN VASHTI?

THEN THE KING SAID TO THE WISE MEN (for so was the king's manner toward all that knew law and judgment; AND THE NEXT UNTO HIM WAS CARSHENA, SHETHAR, ADMATHA, TARSHISH, MERES, MARSENA, AND MEMUCAN, THE SEVEN PRINCES OF PERSIA AND MEDIA, . . .): WHAT SHALL WE DO UNTO QUEEN VASHTI?

THEN THE KING SAID TO THE WISE MEN (for so was the king's manner toward all that knew law and judgment; AND THE NEXT UNTO HIM WAS CARSHENA, SHETHAR, ADMATHA, TARSHISH, MERES, MARSENA, AND MEMUCAN, THE SEVEN PRINCES OF PERSIA AND MEDIA, *which saw the king's face and sat first in the kingdom*): WHAT SHALL WE DO UNTO QUEEN VASHTI?

Study the next excerpt as you did the preceding. The speaker is telling of his uncle who had at first laughed and then grown suddenly serious at a piece of news of how the speaker—then a boy—had pelted the Jews.

NO, BOY, WE MUST NOT (SO BEGAN  
MY UNCLE—*He's with God long since—*  
A-PETTING ME, *the good old man!*)

WE MUST NOT (AND HE SEEMED TO WINCE,  
AND LOST THAT LAUGH WHERETO HAD GROWN  
HIS CHUCKLE AT MY PIECE OF NEWS,  
HOW CLEVERLY I AIMED MY STONE)

I FEAR WE MUST NOT PELT THE JEWS!

—BROWNING: *Baldinucci*.

A final example will drive home the contention that many long sentences complicated with subordinate groups will give up their meaning with a little careful study, and furthermore that when we recognize the source of the difficulty the vocal expression becomes relatively easy. In *Henry VIII*, Cardinal Campeius is begging Queen Katherine to listen patiently to the plea of the Duke of York, which up to that time she had scorned to do; and moreover had bitterly attacked him, saying he was her enemy. It is printed with and without the particular marking to emphasize the fact that what type does not do (except occasionally when an author italicizes) we must do for ourselves: learn to appreciate the different thought values:

Most honour'd madam,  
My Lord of York, out of his noble nature,  
Zeal and obedience he still bore your Grace,

(Forgetting, like a good man, your late censure  
 Both of his truth and him, which was too far)  
 Offers, as I do, in a sign of peace,  
 His service and his counsel.

—III, i.

Most Honor'd Madam,  
**MY LORD OF YORK**, out of His Noble Nature,  
**Zeal and Obedience He Still Bore Your Grace,**  
 (FORGETTING, LIKE A GOOD MAN, YOUR LATE CENSURE  
 BOTH OF HIS TRUTH AND HIM, WHICH WAS TOO FAR)  
**OFFERS, AS I DO, IN A SIGN OF PEACE,**  
**HIS SERVICE AND HIS COUNSEL.**

### REVIEW EXERCISES

As adders held  
 In a strong grasp writhe to be free and sting,  
 The hostile tribes had writhed while Rohab's hand  
 Held them in clutch of steel; but now at last,  
 When Rohab left the spear to thirst, the sword  
 To rust undrawn, and heard no sound more harsh  
 Than the lute's pleading; now that Lutra's love  
 To him was all in all, to which mere crown  
 And throne and people counted naught,—there rose  
 A hundred murmurs sinister—the stir  
 And rustle of his foes who knew their time  
 Had come.

—ARLO BATES: *The Sorrow of Rohab.*

At the termination of this sentence I started, and for a moment paused; for it appeared to me (although I at once concluded that my excited fancy had deceived me)—it appeared to me that, from some very remote portion of the mansion, there came, indistinctly, to my ears what might have been, in its exact similarity

of character, the echo (but a stifled and dull one certainly) of the very cracking and ripping sound which Sir Lancelot had so particularly described.—POE: *The Fall of the House of Usher*.

The second of Chanticleer's two wives, ever since Phoebe's arrival, had been in a state of heavy despondency, caused, as it afterwards appeared, by her inability to lay an egg. One day, however, by her self-important gait, the side-way turn of her head, and the cock of her eye, as she pried into one and another nook of the garden,—croaking to herself, all the while, with inexpressible complacency,—it was made evident that this identical hen, much as mankind undervalued her, carried something about her person, the worth of which was not to be estimated either in gold or precious stones. Shortly after, there was a prodigious cackling and gratulation of Chanticleer and all his family, including the wizened chicken, who appeared to understand the matter quite as well as did his sire, his mother, or his aunt. That afternoon Phoebe found a diminutive egg—not in the regular nest—it was far too precious to be trusted there—but cunningly hidden under the currant-bushes on some dry stalks of last year's grass.

—HAWTHORNE: *The House of the Seven Gables*.

Through the general hum following the stage pause, with the change of positions, etc., came the muffled sound of a pistol shot, which not one-hundredth part of the audience heard at the time—and yet a moment's hush—somehow, surely a vague, startled thrill—and then, through the ornamented, draperied, starr'd and striped space-way of the President's box, a sudden figure, a man raises himself with hands and feet, and stands a moment on the railing, leaps below to the stage (a distance of perhaps fourteen or fifteen feet), falls out of position, catching his boot-heel in the copious

drapery (the American flag), falls on one knee, quickly recovers himself, rises as if nothing had happen'd (he really sprains his ankle, but unfelt then),—and so the figure, Booth, the murderer, dress'd in plain black broadcloth, bare-headed, with a full head of glossy, raven hair, and his eyes like some mad animal's flashing with light and resolution, yet with a certain strange calmness, holds aloft in one hand a large knife—walks along not much back from the footlights—turns fully toward the audience his face of statuesque beauty, lit by those basilisk eyes, flashing with desperation, perhaps insanity—launches out in a firm and steady voice the words, *Sic semper tyrannis*—and then walks with neither slow nor very rapid pace diagonally across to the back of the stage, and disappears.—WHITMAN.

## CHAPTER V

### INVERSION

We have seen that we must group carefully before we can hope to understand. But here is a sentence in which although the grouping is simple, there is a distinctly new problem:

Meanwhile, impatient to mount and ride,  
Booted and spurred, with a heavy stride  
On the opposite shore walked Paul Revere.

—LONGFELLOW: *Paul Revere's Ride*.

What is the difficulty? The groups are inverted, that is, not arranged in the order of everyday conversation. It is rare that we find the subject of a sentence at the end, and hence in this illustration, we may miss the meaning unless we rethink it something as follows: Meanwhile, Paul Revere, impatient to mount and ride, booted and spurred, walked, with a heavy stride, on the opposite shore.

Sometimes the inversion may be only a word or two, as in the following:

Him the Almighty power  
Hurl'd headlong flaming from th' ethereal sky.

—MILTON: *Paradise Lost*.

Was Irving not good, and, of his works, was not his life the best part?—THACKERAY: *Nil Nisi Bonum*.

But even in such simple cases care must be taken to avoid blurring the picture. Here is another sentence that must be straightened out carefully before we can get the meaning:

With sloping masts and dipping prow,  
As who pursued with yell and blow  
Still treads the shadow of his foe,  
And forward bends his head,  
The ship drove fast, loud roar'd the blast,  
And southward aye we fled.

—COLERIDGE: *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner.*

Rewrite the above in the natural order of subject, modifiers, and predicate. Note also how the difficulty is increased because of the subordinate clause:

As who pursued with yell and blow  
Still treads the shadow of his foe,  
And forward bends his head.

But we are greatly helped when we recognize that the sentence is inverted. We note that “With sloping masts,” etc., is incomplete in its meaning, and hence we look forward for the group that completes the sense, which we find in “The ship drove fast,” etc.

#### REVIEW EXERCISES

So saying, a noble stroke he lifted high,  
Which hung not, but so swift with tempest fell  
On the proud crest of Satan, that no sight,  
Nor motion of swift thought, less could his shield,  
Such ruin intercept.

—MILTON: *Paradise Lost.*

High in front advanced,  
 The brandished sword of God before them blazed  
 Fierce as a comet. —MILTON: *Paradise Lost*.

Him, Menelaus, loved of Mars, beheld  
 Advancing with large strides before the rest.

—*The Iliad* (Bryant's translation).

Me master years a hundred since from my parents  
 sunder'd,  
 A little child, they caught me as the savage beast is  
 caught,  
 Then hither me across the sea the cruel slaver brought.  
 —WHITMAN: *Ethiopia Saluting the Colors*.

On the sea and at the Hogue, sixteen hundred ninety-  
 two,  
 Did the English fight the French,—woe to France!  
 And, the thirty-first of May, helter-skelter through the  
 blue,  
 Like a crowd of frightened porpoises a shoal of sharks  
 pursue,  
 Came crowding ship on ship to St. Malo on the Rance,  
 With the English fleet in view.

—BROWNING: *Hervé Riel*.

Whither, 'midst falling dew,  
 While glow the heavens with the last steps of day,  
 Far, through their rosy depths, dost thou pursue  
 Thy solitary way?

—BRYANT: *To a Waterfowl*.

Little thinks, in the field, yon red-cloaked clown,  
 Of thee from the hill-top looking down.

—EMERSON: *Each and All*.

Thus while they look'd, a flourish proud,  
 Where mingled trump, and clarion loud,  
 And fife, and kettle-drum,  
 And sacbut deep, and psaltery,  
 And war-pipe with discordant cry,  
 And cymbal clattering to the sky,  
 Making wild music bold and high,  
 Did up the mountain come;  
 The whilst the bells, with distant chime,  
 Merrily toll'd the hour of prime,  
 And thus the Lindesay spoke.

—WHITTIER: *Snow-Bound.*

As night drew on, and, from the crest  
 Of wooded knolls that ridged the west,  
 The sun, a snow-blown traveler, sank  
 From sight beneath the smothering bank,  
 We piled with care our nightly stack  
 Of wood against the chimney-back.

—*Ibid.*

It little profits that an idle king,  
 By this still hearth, among these barren crags,  
 Match'd with an aged wife, I mete and dole  
 Unequal laws unto a savage race,  
 That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me.

—TENNYSON: *Ulysses.*

How changed is here each spot man makes or fills!  
 In the two Hinkseys nothing keeps the same;  
 The village street its haunted mansion lacks,  
 And from the sign is gone Sibylla's name,  
 And from the roofs the twisted chimney-stacks—  
 Are ye too changed, ye hills?  
 See, 'tis no foot of unfamiliar men  
 To-night from Oxford up your pathway strays!  
 Here came I often, often, in old days—  
 Thyrsis and I; we still had Thyrsis then.

—ARNOLD: *Thyrsis.*

Others for language all their care express,  
And value books, as women, men for dress.

—POPE: *An Essay on Criticism.*

All night, the dreadless angel, unpursued,  
Through Heaven's wide champaign held his way, till  
Morn,  
Waked by the circling Hours, with rosy hand  
Unbarred the gates of light.

—MILTON: *Paradise Lost.*

## CHAPTER VI

### DENOTATION

While we have been studying the preceding chapters we have found ourselves learning to read with greater ease and thoroughness; however, it is quite possible to understand the principles and yet miss the meaning. Merely to group correctly does not necessarily imply reading with understanding. In the lines:

No habitation can be seen; but they  
Who journey thither find themselves alone  
With a few sheep, with rocks and stones, and kites  
That overhead are sailing in the sky.  
It is in truth an utter solitude;

—WORDSWORTH: *Michael*.

there is a word whose meaning in this place is entirely different from its usual one. Can you find it? How could the place be without any habitation, one where those who journey thither find themselves alone with a few sheep, etc., and yet with “kites” sailing overhead in the sky? Would not sailing kites presuppose someone sailing them? Look up this word in the dictionary and when you get its meaning note how that one word affects the picture. Another example:

Do you know the pile-built village where the sago dealers trade?

We see that “village” marks the end of the first group, and yet we may not know what “pile-built” means. Or again, we can read the second group and not grasp the meaning of “sago dealers.” *In fact, a keen student could read the line with perfect expression and yet fail entirely to understand it.* He would see clearly that the line spoke of some kind of village where some kind of dealers trade, and that is all. It is necessary, then, to find out what “pile-built” means. “Built on piles,” you might say. Yes, but do you really know what that means? If you do not, the author might as well have written, “Do you see the little village?” or, “the ancient village?” or any other kind of village. But he wants to bring before your mind a picture you have seen before, or a new one which you may make up *out of old material*. If you have seen a pile-built village, you can easily picture it (you can really get the sense in such a case without recalling the picture); but if you haven’t seen it, what materials have you out of which to make it? It is easy to say a “pile” means “a heavy timber forced into the earth to form a foundation for a building, wharf, or the like”; and “pile-built” means built on piles; and “pile-built village” means a village built on piles. The question is, do you get the meaning? If not, what is the nearest thing to it you have ever seen? Have you seen piles that have been driven into sand to support the foundation of a building? Have you seen piles that served as a breakwater against the beating waves? Have you seen a house or a hut standing on piles? Something like one of these you

must have seen or you can't understand what Kipling saw in that village. You can *substitute your words for the author's, but don't make the great mistake*, that so many make, *of believing that definitions are all we need to enable us to get the author's meaning*. No, the only definition that can satisfy us is the idea, or the sense, or the picture. If our experience isn't enough, then we must get help from dictionary, or encyclopedia, or teacher, or from someone who really has seen the picture or something like it. If we can't get that help, then, at least *we know that we don't know*, and that is far better than deceiving ourselves that we are reading because we can define the words.

In the following scientific extract you will find very little difficulty, and of what the author has to tell you, you will get a general idea in *one rapid reading*.

#### WHY THE CANVASBACK DUCK LEFT CHESAPEAKE BAY

Chesapeake Bay is no longer the special feeding place of the canvasback duck, although sixty years ago it was one of the most important wintering places for ducks in the United States, usually spoken of as a winter resort, though really there was a time during most winters when the ducks were forced by the ice farther south for a few days or weeks.

Here was the preferred winter home of the celebrated canvasback, whence many hundred thousand dollars' worth of the birds have been shipped to the northern markets. Today a canvasback is almost a rarity in Chesapeake Bay, and the few survivors spend the winter farther south, on the North Carolina coast.

Chesapeake Bay was formerly the natural goal of a large proportion of the canvasbacks and redheads which

nested in central Canada. They had a peculiar migration route. Nesting in the lake region of Manitoba and Saskatchewan, they found stretching thence southeastward an almost continuous chain of lakes supplying an abundance of food and especially favorable conditions to tempt a journey in that direction. This flight led, naturally, to Chesapeake Bay, which used to provide an almost unlimited quantity of their greatest delicacy—wild celery—and otherwise was admirably adapted for a fall, winter, and spring sojourn, except during an occasional week or two of unusually cold weather.

Persistent persecution by gunners from early fall to late spring has almost annihilated the myriads of fowls of the finest varieties that used to blacken the surface of the bay.

Now read it again with particular care. If you were reading just for the pleasure of the story you would not care to stop for each detail, but is it not true that a second reading gives you many new and interesting details? The first time you read it did you note that sixty years ago Chesapeake Bay was an important place for ducks? that occasionally the ice there would drive them farther south? for a few days or weeks? Did you remember, after the first reading, that the few surviving canvasbacks now winter on the Carolina coast?

This study, then, has shown us that even in paragraphs no more difficult than those in our everyday lessons, careful reading is necessary in order to insure our not overlooking important statements. It drives us to see what stands in the way of our getting the sense: whether it be the meaning of a word, or lack of familiarity with the idea expressed by the group. In

the following paragraph there is apparently nothing difficult to understand:

Some birds are protected because of their diet, as the wood-peckers and fly-catchers; others for their song—thrushes and mocking-birds; others for esthetic reasons—gulls and terns; while the protection of ducks and geese is purely utilitarian; they furnish a highly prized food, and the sport of hunting them involves an outdoor life and exercise which is worth far more to the individual and the community than the dietary value of the game secured.

The author says, "Some birds are protected because of their diet, as the wood-peckers and fly-catchers." You understand that "wood-peckers" and "fly-catchers" are birds, and you know what "protected" and "diet" are; but do you know that in this sentence "protected" means protected by laws which prohibit killing these birds? Again, you know that "diet" stands for that on which the birds feed; but it is not until you know that this diet consists of insects that destroy our trees and flowers and crops that you get the complete force of the sentence. It is very easy to read such a sentence as "Some birds are protected because of their diet"; but when you read it once or twice carefully you are compelled to ask yourself "why?" and thus you learn that the words have no value for you until they convey definite meaning. Grouping narrows down the problem: it shows us what is clear and what is obscure and then we reach the point where we recognize that certain words or groups have to be defined clearly before we can understand the text.

It is perhaps our very familiarity with the appearance or sound of words that stands (whether we stop to think of it or not) in the way of our getting thought. "Protection" and "diet" and "kite" and "pile" and "built" are not sufficiently strange in appearance to arrest our attention; so we read along content to get a little here and a little there, seldom recognizing how much has escaped us until we are closely questioned. This matter is so important that too much emphasis cannot be laid on it. I wish it were in my power to persuade you to read over some lesson you had last week or some article you read in yesterday's newspaper, to prove that you had only half read it! I can only urge upon you then to follow carefully the rest of this chapter and test to the uttermost the soundness of the principles discussed in it.

In the foregoing illustrations we should probably have got at least a fair part of the thought in one reading. We have found, however, that a second and a third reading not only gave us more thoughts and ideas, but showed that there were some words that had to be defined before we could get the idea, no matter how carefully we grouped. In the next selection the appearance of the words is repellent, and when we attempt to read in our usual hurried manner, we get very little from it, *and then we are likely to give up trying*, thinking that the passage is too hard. And yet it is full of interesting information taken from a well known work on psychology, by William James.

The very word "psychology" sounds hard and dry, but what could be more interesting than to know how

we think, and feel, and see, and taste, and why our muscles move! These things psychology teaches us. In the paragraphs that follow, the author is discussing taste. The first section, if read with a little care, will give up its meaning when we become acquainted with a few simple terms. But even here the analysis of the paragraph group by group will reveal not only what you know but what you don't, and in the latter case you will learn exactly what stands in the way of your getting the meaning.

Taste has been ascribed to all portions of the mouth from the lips to the stomach, but is properly confined to those portions of the tongue and soft palate furnished with taste-buds. Experiments have been directed towards ascertaining whether certain tastes are confined or not to certain portions of the organ. The result is somewhat in doubt, but it is generally believed that bitter is best tasted on the soft palate and back of the tongue, and sweet and sour on the tip.

If you have read that discussion carefully, you have got the gist of it. Now, in the next paragraph the difficulties are much greater, though the facts are no less interesting.

The classification of tastes can be reduced to four: sweet, sour, bitter, and salt. Pungent tastes must be excluded: as must also alkaline, astringent, and metallic tastes, which seem to be combinations of touch, taste, and smell. Many so-called tastes, like that of onions, are properly odors. The specific taste that distinguishes one body from another, as an apple from an orange, is not taste proper, but a combination of various sensory properties.

I am sure many people would say that is too hard; only for learned scholars; dry-as-dust; not worth studying out, anyhow. Let us see. The first sentence is easy, but when we read the first clause of the second sentence we stop because we do not know the meaning of "pungent tastes." What are "pungent tastes"? If someone were to ask us what tastes must be excluded in our classification we might answer correctly, "pungent tastes," but we should only be deceiving ourselves if we thought that the answer meant anything. It is only when some one tells us that a pungent taste is a sharp, or biting taste, *like that of pepper or mustard*, that we begin to understand what pungent tastes are. Then we ask ourselves why must pungent tastes be excluded, and it is possible we may not be able to tell. Let us leave it then, for a while, and take up the next clause, which divides itself into groups about as follows: "as must also      alkaline, astringent,      and metallic tastes,      which seem to be combinations      of touch, taste, and smell."

What is an alkaline taste? an astringent taste? a metallic taste? The dictionary can help us only to a certain extent. It is not enough to know that to be astringent is, as the dictionary tells us, to have the power "to contract or draw together soft organic tissues"; we must have had some experience of an astringent taste. But when some one reminds us that we did have that experience when we tasted the skins of pecan nuts, or green persimmons, or, more commonly still, tea that has been steeped too long, we see that an astringent taste is merely an unusual name

for a very common experience. But why must an astringent taste be excluded? When we answer that question we answer also the question why pungent tastes must be excluded. And here the author's final group helps us out: because "they seem to be combinations of three senses." One really *feels* the burning sensation of pepper and mustard. One feels the pucker of the lips and tongue after drinking over-steeped tea. And again we have learned that many groups containing unfamiliar words may really be describing very familiar ideas and experiences. In the next sentence the author speaks of "so-called tastes." A moment's reflection will show us what he means; but how interesting it is when we get (what he has not given us before) a clear illustration of a "so-called" taste. He tells us that what we call the taste of an onion is really its odor.

The final sentence would be grouped about as follows: "The specific taste that distinguishes one body from another (as an apple from an orange), is not taste proper, but a combination of various sensory properties." What is a specific taste? When you have answered the question you can test the correctness of your answer by asking yourself, "Do I know what is the specific taste of an apple? or of an orange?" Now, we have always called this specific taste a "taste proper," that is, a real taste, yet the author says that we have been wrong: "It is," he says, "a combination of various sensory properties." Do we understand him? If not, why not? Because we do not know what "sensory properties" means? Then

someone tells us "sensory" means pertaining to the senses, such as touch, smell, etc. Now the group's meaning is clear, and we understand the whole sentence, which means that what we call the taste of, let us say, an apple, is not a pure taste, but a combination of a sweet or a sour taste with perhaps an agreeable odor, and a certain sense of hardness, or softness, or mealiness, or juiciness.

The chief value of this exercise is that now the student knows what he knows. He sees where his difficulty has been, and if someone should challenge his interpretation he can defend it without fear of being caught off his guard. And if in the course of the discussion it should appear that his interpretation is open to doubt, he is in excellent position to listen to argument and accept correction if he is proved in the wrong. But I believe that more important than all is the fact that such a procedure as we have gone through shows the student exactly where he needs help, and he cannot then delude himself that Denotation doesn't matter, or that the author is obscure, or, in class work, that so long as the teacher doesn't ask any questions about that particular sentence, nothing else counts.

If these paragraphs seem hard, compare them with numberless paragraphs in textbooks used in high schools and see how much less difficult they are. A passage illustrating some difficulty has been chosen on purpose to show you *how to study*, and to prove that a passage that looks very hard may prove to be fairly easy if you go at it in the right way. Many of the

ideas described in the printed page are really not new to you, but since you never described them in the way the author does, since you may never have used the same words that he does, you frequently do not understand him until you become used to his language. It cannot be said too often that after you have the meaning of the words and of the group, or groups, you may then be in possession only of the tools to work with. The test is whether you know the meaning of the sentence. Have you the thought, the idea, the picture? Call it what you will, do you understand? And if you don't, why not? Is it a word, or a phrase, or a comma, or the construction that stands between you and the author? Do you know WHY you don't know? Your first experience with new words and new constructions is the crucial one. The dictionary or a friend will help you get the meaning, and after that the word or expression is part of your vocabulary and no longer bothers you in your reading. The danger is that you may not ask for help, and rest content with a vague understanding, or with none.

You may ask "Must I be deprived of the pleasure of reading a poem or a story simply because I can't get every picture?" or, "Can't I get enjoyment from a speech or a play unless I know what every word in it means?" or, "Must I look up the meaning of every word in my history, or literature lesson in order to master it?" Let me try to answer you.

It is impossible in the course of our daily reading to look up the meaning of every word, and since we are seldom called to account for meanings, we are

content to go on without them. If we happen to miss the drift of a whole paragraph through failure to get the denotation of a word, well, it doesn't happen often and better luck next time. Then if we come across a word often enough we somehow or other get a pretty clear conception of its meaning after a while; and so again we are content to take chances in increasing our vocabulary, and sometimes we win and more often we lose.

Now, as I said before, you are hardly expected to get the denotation of every word in every sentence, but where are we to draw the line? Surely when *you* write you expect to be understood, and if the reader happens not to know the meaning of a certain word, it is possible you may fail utterly in your purpose. If you say, "Our trip was spoiled because the carburetor didn't work," your friend may learn that your trip was spoiled because something or other didn't work, and that information may suffice; but he will never *really* know what the trouble was. And if you write that he can find a given line of *The Merchant of Venice* in an unexpurgated edition, and he ignores the "unexpurgated," he will hunt forever through an expurgated text without finding the line.

And so we go on content with a meagre vocabulary, until we leave school with no power to interpret the printed page, and what is worse, with no particular interest in it. Now what is one to do? The answer can't be absolute. The great need is, however, to read everything with some care and then decide what words or expressions it is absolutely necessary to understand

in order not to miss the vital points. It depends on the object we have in mind when we read.

Is it entertainment? Well, one doesn't need to know every word in order to enjoy *Silas Marner* or *Ivanhoe* or *Julius Caesar*. But how many words can be ignored? Can we enjoy a novel and know but three-quarters of the words? half the words? What is the lowest limit? The danger of it all is that we get to believe that reading for entertainment is like going to the "movies," where we pay our dimes, sit down, let our brains go to sleep, and the pictures do the rest.

But in serious reading—history, literature, science—one often carries over into it the loose habits acquired in reading for pleasure. Then the trouble begins, for it may be the most serious of matters if one fails to get the force of a certain word, or group, or sentence. What then? Of course in some cases one sees that he must get the meaning: the teacher tells him he will be examined on it; or there is something he must do which can't be done unless he understands a particular passage. And it all comes back at last to deciding whether one really understands the sentence, and if one does not, whether he thinks it's necessary for his enjoyment or information to find out what it means. Most articles in the popular fiction and newspapers are written for busy, hurried people, and students must not forget that great literature, history, and science cannot be written in popular style. I am almost prepared to state that instead of the careful study of the page in school helping us to get more out of the newspaper, our careless slipshod reading of

the newspaper is more likely to unfit us for reading literature and the textbooks of the schoolroom.

It does not follow that because you know the meaning of the individual words in a sentence you necessarily understand the meaning of the whole sentence. Denotation in the sense in which we are using it stands for the meaning of the whole as well as of a single word: the term applies equally to the period and the poem. We know that in the intercourse of everyday life and in our ordinary reading it is easy to get the meaning. And yet unless we are on our guard the very simplicity of language may be a pitfall. I know a class of students who failed to see the humor in a misprinted passage in a well-known book, which read, "On the receipt of this sad news, his upper jaw fell." Professor Arlo Bates quotes this example of carelessness in writing, which appeared in a popular magazine; but I think many a student might fail to see the nonsense of it even with the printed word before him: "As the old men walked toward the west in the still afternoon, one of them pointed first to the setting sun and then to the long shadows which moved on before them."

Even Poe's *Raven* supplies an awful warning. I quote the closing stanza. You recall that above the poet's door is a bust of Pallas, and on that perches the raven. Now says Poe:

And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is sitting  
On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber door;

And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's that is  
dreaming,

And the lamplight o'er him streaming throws his shadow  
on the floor;

And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on  
the floor

Shall be lifted—nevermore!

How could the lamplight “stream over him” in such  
a way as to throw the raven’s shadow on the floor?  
Where would the lamp have to be to do that, and is it  
likely that Poe’s lamp was there?

In the second place there is scientific, or economic,  
or historical writing that needs *aggressive attention*  
and some hard thinking. We have had examples of  
this, and we need dwell no longer on this aspect.

But the third category is by no means to be neg-  
lected. Here is Tennyson’s *The Eagle*—only six lines  
(“Fragment,” the poet calls it) and no story, no  
moral in it, nothing but beautiful pictures, which you  
*must see*:

He clasps the crag with crooked hands;  
Close to the sun in lonely lands,  
Ring’d with the azure world, he stands.

The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls;  
He watches from his mountain walls,  
And like a thunderbolt he falls.

You must build up the scene, step by step. The  
title tells you who the “He” is. And you know  
enough about eagles to *understand* what the first line  
is about. But that is not enough in this case. You  
*must see*. The second line is incomplete, and you

must wait for the end of the third line before you can start to build up your next picture; or at best you can only be gathering material, so to speak, for the picture. Now we must go back. What does "Ring'd with the azure world" mean? It isn't sufficient to answer, "Surrounded by the blue sky"; you must *see* it. But even when you do there is one little word that you may have missed: "Close." How could he be "close" to the sun? But I leave you now to the joy of finishing the poem, convinced, as I hope you are, that the poet intended you to see and enjoy, even as he did.

Let me suggest a test. Tennyson saw his picture clearly. To prove whether you see it with equal clearness, suppose yourself a painter putting this picture on canvas. What colors would you use? Where would you put the crag? the eagle? the sun? Of course you couldn't paint all the picture, but the still life you could put on canvas.

Just when it is necessary to follow the text closely, to weigh each word and group, to see the complete picture, and when, on the other hand, only to "sense," as it were, its meaning, cannot be set down with certainty; but there is no doubt but that in a large part of great literature the author writes that we may see all that he saw and share with him the beauty he describes. Let us close by giving examples of such writing:

I linger'd there  
Till every daisy slept, and Love's white star  
Beam'd thro' the thicken'd cedar in the dusk.  
—TENNYSON: *The Gardener's Daughter*.

The next passage, from the same poem, is much more difficult, apparently so hard that most would pass it by. And yet how beautiful the picture! One which you would stop long to look at were it hanging in an art gallery. There are few hard words and nothing particularly hard in the thought. It is the length and complexity of the sentence, and the need of building up the picture group by group that make the passage seem so difficult.

For up the porch there grew an Eastern rose,  
That, flowering high, the last night's gale had caught,  
And blown across the walk. One arm aloft—  
Gown'd in pure white, that fitted to the shape—  
Holding the bush, to fix it back, she stood,  
A single stream of all her soft brown hair  
Pour'd on one side: the shadow of the flowers  
Stole all the golden gloss, and, wavering  
Lovingly lower, trembled on her waist—  
Ah, happy shade—and still went wavering down,  
But, ere it touch'd a foot, that might have danced  
The greensward into greener circles, dipt,  
And mix'd with shadows of the common ground!

Here is some matter that requires closest attention to follow. It deals with science, religion, psychology, law, and other subjects without a story in them, and not appealing very strongly, at any rate not at once, to our curiosity and desire for knowledge. Yet any man or woman with the slightest pretension to education should be able to read without too great a strain such matter as I refer to. An author is speaking of the difficulty of judging sometimes whether an act is right or wrong. The passage looks hard. It is

printed solid. There is no dialogue in it; and yet it is packed full of interest. The title wouldn't be a good one for a popular magazine article, but many a time you have had experience with that very "intricacy." Have you not often been puzzled in trying to pass honest judgment on the act of some fellow student? Have you yourself not been wronged by student, teacher, and even parent, largely because they were judging you by one standard, while you felt you should be judged by another? Well, the moral judgment was not easy to pass because there were so many factors entering into your case. So you see again, "Intricacy of Moral Judgments" is only an educated man's title for a subject all of us have had much experience with.

#### INTRICACY OF MORAL JUDGMENTS

If we attempt to reduce this discussion to its psychological terms, we may make some such statement as the following: No person is in a position to pass judgment upon the moral character of any act unless he understands thoroughly all of the conditions which surround the act. In order to understand historical relations fully one needs to have such a view of the historical situation as it is extremely difficult for a modern student to acquire. The modern student is, in the first place, guided in all of his judgments by an established mode of thought which is peculiar to his own generation. We have certain notions in this day about the treatment of colonies, for example, that are wholly different from the notions that obtained at the time that England was in controversy with her American colonies. The notions that we now entertain are the results of long

historical periods which have recorded themselves in the literature and language of our people. The youth of today is introduced directly to these political and ethical ideas without any special reference to the earlier controversies out of which the present notions have grown. When, therefore, he is suddenly carried back in his historical studies to situations that differ altogether from the situations that now confront him, he is likely to carry back, without being fully aware of the fallacy of his procedure, those standards of judgment and canons of ethical thought which constitute his present inheritance. He judges, in other words, by modern standards, situations which are in character wholly different from those of today.—JUDD: *Psychology of High-School Subjects*.

(I purposely chose a paragraph that was not easy; that required careful attention; that meant looking up new words, and making some careful grouping. But if you have mastered that paragraph, have you not done something splendidly worth while? as worth while, and under some conditions far more worth while, than finishing a task in the shop or laboratory?)

#### REVIEW EXERCISES

Among the following exercises will be found examples of two kinds of problems: those dealing with picture making; and those dealing with the difficulty of the language, style, and ideas.

The steer forgot to graze,  
And, where the hedge-row cuts the pathway, stood,  
Leaning his horns into the neighbor field,  
And lowing to his fellows.

—TENNYSON: *The Gardener's Daughter*.

Short of stature, large of limb,  
 Burly face and russet beard,  
 All the women stared at him,  
 When in Iceland he appeared.

“Look!” they said,  
 With nodding head,  
 “There goes Thangbrand, Olaf’s Priest.”

—LONGFELLOW: *Thangbrand the Priest.*

And Sohrab came there, and went in, and stood  
 Upon the thick piled carpets in the tent.

—ARNOLD: *Sohrab and Rustum.*

What picture do you get? Well, you are wrong.  
 Look up “pile” in the dictionary.

The gray sea and the long black land;  
 And the yellow half-moon large and low;  
 And the startled little waves that leap  
 In fiery ringlets from their sleep,  
 As I gain the cove with pushing prow,  
 And quench its speed i’ the slushy sand.

Then a mile of warm sea-scented beach;  
 Three fields to cross till a farm appears;  
 A tap at the pane, the quick sharp scratch  
 And blue spurt of a lighted match,  
 And a voice less loud, thro’ its joys and fears,  
 And the two hearts beating each to each!

—BROWNING: *Meeting at Night.*

Sweet are the uses of adversity,  
 Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,  
 Wears yet a precious jewel in his head;  
 And this our life exempt from public haunt  
 Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,  
 Sermons in stones and good in every thing.

—*As You Like It*, II, i.

*Jaques.* All the world's a stage,  
And all the men and women merely players:  
They have their exits and their entrances;  
And one man in his time plays many parts,  
His acts being seven ages. At first the infant,  
Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms.  
And then the whining school-boy, with his satchel  
And shining morning face, creeping like snail  
Unwillingly to school. And then the lover,  
Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad  
Made to his mistress' eyebrow. Then a soldier,  
Full of strange oaths and bearded like the pard,  
Jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel,  
Seeking the bubble reputation  
Even in the cannon's mouth. And then the justice,  
In fair round belly with good capon lined,  
With eyes severe and beard of formal cut,  
Full of wise saws and modern instances;  
And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts  
Into the lean and slipper'd pantaloon,  
With spectacles on nose and pouch on side,  
His youthful hose, well saved, a world too wide  
For his shrunk shank; and his big manly voice,  
Turning again toward childish treble, pipes  
And whistles in his sound. Last scene of all,  
That ends this strange eventful history,  
Is second childishness and mere oblivion,  
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans every thing.

—*Ibid.*, II, vii.

*Rosalind.* Time travels in divers paces with divers persons. I'll tell you who Time ambles withal, who Time trots withal, who Time gallops withal and who he stands still withal.

*Orlando.* I prithee, who doth he trot withal?

*Rosalind.* Marry, he trots hard with a young maid between the contract of her marriage and the day it is

solemnized: if the interim be but a se'nnight, Time's pace is so hard that it seems the length of seven year.

*Orlando.* Who ambles Time withal?

*Rosalind.* With a priest that lacks Latin and a rich man that hath not the gout, for the one sleeps easily because he cannot study and the other lives merrily because he feels no pain, the one lacking the burden of lean and wasteful learning, the other knowing no burden of heavy tedious penury; these Time ambles withal.

*Orlando.* Who doth he gallop withal?

*Rosalind.* With a thief to the gallows, for though he go as softly as foot can fall, he thinks himself too soon there.

*Orlando.* Who stays it still withal?

*Rosalind.* With lawyers in the vacation; for they sleep between term and term and then they perceive not how Time moves.

—*Ibid.*, III, ii.

Under an oak, whose boughs were moss'd with age  
 And high top bald with dry antiquity,  
 A wretched ragged man, o'ergrown with hair,  
 Lay sleeping on his back: about his neck  
 A green and gilded snake had wreathed itself,  
 Who with her head nimble in threats approach'd  
 The opening of his mouth; but suddenly,  
 Seeing Orlando, it unlink'd itself,  
 And with indented glides did slip away  
 Into a bush: under which bush's shade  
 A lioness, with udders all drawn dry,  
 Lay couching, head on ground, with catlike watch,  
 When that the sleeping man should stir; for 'tis  
 The royal disposition of that beast  
 To prey on nothing that doth seem as dead:  
 This seen, Orlando did approach the man  
 And found it was his brother, his elder brother.

—*Ibid.*, IV, iii.

Then murmur'd Arthur, "Place me in the barge."  
So to the barge they came. There those three  
Queens

Put forth their hands, and took the King, and wept.  
But she, that rose the tallest of them all  
And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,  
And loosed the shatter'd casque, and chafed his  
hands,

And call'd him by his name, complaining loud,  
And dropping bitter tears against a brow  
Striped with dark blood: for all his face was white  
And colourless, and like the wither'd moon  
Smote by the fresh beam of the springing east;  
And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd with drops  
Of onset; and the light and lustrous curls—  
That made his forehead like a rising sun  
High from the dais-throne—were parch'd with dust;  
Or clotted into points and hanging loose,  
Mix'd with the knightly growth that fringed his  
lips.

So like a shatter'd column lay the King;  
Not like that Arthur who, with lance in rest,  
From spur to plume a star of tournament,  
Shot thro' the lists at Camelot, and charged  
Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.

—TENNYSON: *The Passing of Arthur.*

So said he, and the barge with oar and sail  
Moved from the brink, like some full-breasted swan  
That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,  
Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes the flood  
With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir Bedivere  
Revolving many memories, till the hull  
Look'd one black dot against the verge of dawn,  
And on the mere the wailing died away.

—*Ibid.*

As when a boar  
 Or lion mid the hounds and huntsmen stands,  
 Fearfully strong, and fierce of eye, and they  
 In square array assault him, and their hands  
 Fling many a javelin;—yet his noble heart  
 Fears not, nor does he fly, although at last  
 His courage cause his death; and oft he turns,  
 And tries their ranks; and where he makes a rush  
 The ranks give way;—so Hector moved and turned  
 Among the crowd, and bade his followers cross  
 The trench.

—*The Iliad* (Bryant's translation).

How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!  
 Here will we sit and let the sound of music  
 Creep in our ears: soft stillness and the night  
 Become the touches of sweet harmony.  
 Sit, Jessica. Look how the floor of heaven  
 Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold:  
 There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st  
 But in his motion like an angel sings,  
 Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubims;  
 Such harmony is in immortal souls;  
 But whilst this muddy vesture of decay  
 Doth grossly close it in, we can not hear it.

—*Merchant of Venice*, V, i.

In person, Caesar was tall and slight. His features were more refined than was usual in Roman faces. The forehead was wide and high, the nose large and thin, the lips full, the eyes dark gray like an eagle's, the neck extremely thick and sinewy. His complexion was pale. His beard and mustache were kept carefully shaved. His hair was short and naturally scanty, falling off toward the end of his life and leaving him partially bald. His voice, especially when he spoke in public, was high and shrill.—FROUDE: *Julius Caesar*.

In person, the Prince of Orange was above the middle height, perfectly well made and sinewy, but rather spare than stout. His eyes, hair, beard, and complexion were brown. His head was small, symmetrically shaped, combining the alertness and compactness characteristic of the soldier, with the capacious brow furrowed prematurely with the horizontal lines of thought, denoting the statesman and the sage.—MOTLEY: *Character of William of Orange*.

One mast was broken short off, six or eight feet from the deck, and lay over on the side, entangled in a maze of sail and rigging; and in that ruin, as the ship rolled and beat,—which she did with a violence quite inconceivable,—beat the side as if it would stave it in. Some efforts were being made to cut this portion of the wreck away; for as the ship, which was broadside on, turned toward us in her rolling, I plainly descried her people at work with axes—especially one active figure, with long curling hair. But a great cry, audible even above the wind and water, rose from the shore; the sea, sweeping over the wreck, made a clean breach, and carried men, spars, easks, planks, bulwarks,—heaps of such toys, into the boiling surge.—DICKENS: *David Copperfield*.

The Moon arose: she shone upon the lake,  
Which lay one smooth expanse of silver light;  
She shone upon the hills and rocks, and cast  
Upon their hollows and their hidden glens  
A blacker depth of shade.

—SOUTHEY: *Madoc*.

I will tell you.

The barge she sat in, like a burnish'd throne,  
Burn'd on the water: the poop was beaten gold;  
Purple the sails, and so perfumèd that

The winds were love-sick with them; the oars were  
silver,  
Which to the tune of flutes kept stroke, and made  
The water which they beat to follow faster,  
As amorous of their strokes. For her own person,  
It beggar'd all description: she did lie  
In her pavilion—cloth-of-gold of tissue—  
O'er-picturing that Venus where we see  
The fancy outwork nature: on each side her  
Stood pretty dimpled boys, like smiling Cupids,  
With divers-color'd fans, whose wind did seem  
To glow the delicate cheeks which they did cool,  
And what they undid, did.

—*Antony and Cleopatra*, II, ii.

The numerous letters in the newspapers urging conscription; the pointed demand by Unionist leaders that conscription be resorted to; the reports of correspondents on the apparent indifference of the masses to the great issue—all these indicate that voluntary enlistment has not brought the desired results.

The next four paragraphs are inserted, first, because they so strongly support the contention of this whole book, and secondly, because they are typical examples of literature that isn't "easy," but which is nevertheless full of interest and instruction for every student who is fairly serious-minded.

Do you know, if you read this [book], that you cannot read that; that what you lose today you cannot gain to-morrow? Will you go and gossip with your house-maid or your stable-boy, when you may talk with queens and kings; or flatter yourselves that it is with any worthy consciousness of your own claims to respect that you jostle with the hungry and common crowd for

*entrée* here, and audience there, when all the while this eternal court is open to you, with its society, wide as the world, multitudinous as its days,—the chosen and the mighty of every place and time? Into that you may enter always; in that you may take fellowship and rank accordingly to your wish; from that, once entered into it, you can never be an outcast but by your own fault; by your aristocracy of companionship there, your own inherent aristocracy will be assuredly tested, and the motives with which you strive to take high place in the society of the living, measured as to all the truth and sincerity that are in them, by the place you desire to take in this company of the dead.—RUSKIN: *Of Kings' Treasuries*.

And be sure also, if the author is worth anything, that you will not get at his meaning all at once,—nay, that at his whole meaning you will not for a long time arrive in anywise. Not that he does not say what he means, and in strong words too; but he cannot say it all, and what is more strange, *will* not, but in a hidden way and in parables, in order that he may be sure you want it. I cannot quite see the reason of this, nor analyze that cruel reticence in the breasts of wise men which makes them always hide their deeper thought. They do not give it you by way of help, but of reward, and will make themselves sure that you deserve it before they allow you to reach it. But it is the same with the physical type of wisdom, gold. There seems, to you and me, no reason why the electric forces of the earth should not carry whatever there is of gold within it at once to the mountain-tops; so the kings and people might know that all the gold they could get was there, and without any trouble of digging, or anxiety, or chance, or waste of time, cut it away, and coin as much as they needed. But nature does not manage it so. She puts it in little fissures in the earth, nobody knows where. You may

dig long and find none. You must dig painfully to find any.—*Ibid.*

And it is just the same with men's best wisdom. When you come to a good book, you must ask yourself, "Am I inclined to work as an Australian miner would? Are my pickaxes and shovels in good order, and am I in good trim, myself, my sleeves well up to the elbow, and my breath good, and my temper?" And keeping the figure a little longer, even at a cost of tiresomeness, for it is a thoroughly useful one, the metal you are in search of being the author's mind or meaning, his words are as the rock which you have to crush and smelt in order to get at it. And your pickaxes are your own care, wit, and learning; your smelting furnace is your own thoughtful soul. Do not hope to get at any good author's meaning without those tools and that fire; often you will need sharpest, finest chiselling and patientest fusing before you can gather one grain of the metal.—*Ibid.*

And, therefore, first of all, I tell you earnestly and authoritatively (I *know* I am right in this) you must get into the habit of looking intensely at words, and assuring yourself of their meaning, syllable by syllable—nay, letter by letter. For though it is only by reason of the opposition of letters in the function of signs to sounds in the function of signs, that the study of books is called "literature," and that a man versed in it is called, by the consent of nations, a man of letters instead of a man of books or of words, you may yet connect with that accidental nomenclature this real fact,—that you might read all the books in the British Museum (if you could live long enough) and remain an utterly "illiterate," uneducated person; but that if you read ten pages of a good book, letter by letter,—that is to say, with real accuracy,—you are forevermore in some measure an

educated person. The entire difference between education and non-education (as regards the merely intellectual part of it) consists in this accuracy. A well-educated gentleman may not know many languages, may not be able to speak any but his own, may have read very few books. But whatever language he knows, he knows precisely; whatever word he pronounces, he pronounces rightly. Above all, he is learned in the *peerage* of words, knows the words of true descent and ancient blood, at a glance, from the words of modern *canaille*, remembers all their ancestry, their intermarriages, distant relationships, and the extent to which they were admitted, and offices they held, among the national *noblesse* of words at any time and in any country. But an uneducated person may know, by memory, many languages, and talk them all, and yet truly know not a word of any,—not a word even of his own. An ordinarily clever and sensible seaman will be able to make his way ashore at most ports, yet he has only to speak a sentence of any language to be known for an illiterate person; so also the accent, or turn of expression of a single sentence, will at once mark a scholar. And this is so strongly felt, so conclusive admitted, by educated persons, that a false accent or a mistaken syllable is enough in the parliament of any civilized nation, to assign to a man a certain degree of inferior standing forever.—*Ibid.*

As toilsome I wander'd Virginia's woods,  
To the music of rustling leaves kieck'd by my feet (for  
  'twas autumn),  
I mark'd at the foot of a tree the grave of a soldier;  
Mortally wounded he and buried on the retreat (easily  
  all could I understand),  
The halt of a mid-day hour, when up! no time to lose—  
  yet this sign left,  
On a tablet scrawl'd and nail'd on the tree by the grave,  
*Bold, cautious, true, and my loving comrade.*

Long, long I muse, then on my way go wandering,  
Many a changeful season to follow, and many a scene  
of life,  
Yet at times through changeful season and scene, abrupt,  
    alone, or in the crowded street,  
Comes before me the unknown soldier's grave, comes the  
    inscription rude in Virginia's woods,  
*Bold, cautious, true, and my loving comrade.*  
—WHITMAN: *As Toilsome I Wander'd Virginia's Woods.*

In the books you use in connection with your literature, history, civics, etc., will be found on every page opportunity for further study of this important aspect of interpretation.

And the more you use the printed page in connection with your literature, history, civics, etc., the more will you appreciate the fact that Denotation is for you at the present time the most vital factor in your studies.

## CHAPTER VII

### AN EXERCISE IN ANALYSIS

So far we have been studying separately Grouping, Group Sequence, Group Values, Inversion, and Denotation. We will now study a piece of literature illustrating all these principles except Subordination.

The following is taken from Tennyson's *Enoch Arden*. Enoch Arden has been shipwrecked, and after the death of his companions, is left alone on an island close to the tropics. Read the extract, keeping in mind these conditions:

The mountain wooded to the peak, the lawns  
And winding glades high up like ways to heaven,  
The slender coco's drooping crown of plumes,  
The lightning flash of insect and of bird,  
The lustre of the long convolvulus  
That coil'd around the stately stems, and ran  
Ev'n to the limit of the land, the glows  
And glories of the broad belt of the world,  
All these he saw; but what he fain had seen  
He could not see, the kindly human face,  
Nor ever hear a kindly voice, but heard  
The myriad shriek of wheeling ocean-fowl,  
The league-long roller thundering on the reef,  
The moving whisper of huge trees that branch'd  
And blossom'd in the zenith, or the sweep

Of some precipitous rivulet to the wave,  
As down the shore he ranged, or all day long  
Sat often in the seaward-gazing gorge,  
A shipwreck'd sailor, waiting for a sail.

Unless you have read very deliberately you have got very few details of the picture. You perhaps have a vague idea of a lonely man amid great scenic beauty, and a fairly vivid picture in the last line of the shipwrecked sailor waiting for a sail.

There is not much story in the extract and, therefore, one is inclined to hurry on without taking time to see the picture. Let us now take up the lines in detail, beginning with the groups, *referring constantly to the text during the entire discussion:*

The mountain wooded to the peak,  
the lawns And winding glades high up like ways to  
heaven,  
The slender coco's drooping crown of plumes,  
The lightning flash of insect and of bird,  
The lustre of the long convolvulus  
That coil'd around the stately stems,  
and ran Ev'n to the limit of the land,  
the glows And glories of the broad belt of the world,  
All these he saw;

and so on. Already the picture is becoming clearer, and yet we find a number of words and phrases that have no meaning for us. With a little effort we see the mountain wooded to the peak, but we must know that "lawns" as used here does not mean lawns like those in front of our homes, but "a glade or open space in the woods." Now, the dictionary tells us

further that a glade is “a clearing or open space in a wood.” So the two words convey about the same meaning; and we must picture the lawns and *winding* glades high up like ways to heaven. The next line is absolutely meaningless until we learn that “coco” is “the palm-tree that produces cocoanuts: cultivated in all tropical regions. It has a branchless stem sixty to ninety feet high, above which are feather-like leaves eighteen to twenty feet long.” From this definition we can see also why the coco is called slender, and why the author refers to the “feather-like leaves” as “drooping crown of plumes.” Why the poet speaks of the “lightning flash of insect and of bird,” you can no doubt see for yourself; but all you can gather from the next three lines is that something or other has a lustre and coils around stems and runs all over the land. When we discover that “convolvulus” are creeping and twining herbs with extremely showy, brilliant, trumpet-shaped flowers, we understand why the poet speaks of “the lustre” and of “long convolvulus,” and we get a picture of the long vines, some climbing around the trees and others running all over the island even to the sea.

What does “the broad belt of the world” mean? Is it the horizon, or is it that broad belt which encircles the world and is called the tropical zone? Then, what picture do you get of the “glows and glories” of this belt?

With a little thought you can get the meaning of the next five lines, but in the line “The moving whisper,” etc., must you not stop long enough to see the moving

leaves and hear their whispering as it passes from tree to tree, and to ask yourself what is meant by trees “that branch’d and blossom’d in the zenith”? We learn that the zenith is a term used in astronomy to denote the point in the heavens directly overhead: but how can we speak of trees that branch and blossom in the zenith? The explanation is that in the tropical countries many trees, like the coco, rise straight and tall and do not begin to send out branches until they are high in the air.

Why does the author speak of Enoch Arden as “ranging” instead of “walking”? Here, again, the picture becomes doubly interesting when we learn that to range means to walk to and fro as if in search of something.

We have now prepared ourselves to study the picture as a whole. We know the meaning of the words and phrases, and have determined the groups. We have the parts of the author’s picture and these we must now put together, but unless we are careful we may lose sight of the picture in one group as we pass on to the next. In the line, “The mountain wooded to the peak,” we get a picture, but there is no *statement* made concerning it; and if you will take the rest of the pictures down to “the glows And glories of the broad belt of the world,” you will find that there is no predicate. Then come the words, “All these he saw,” and we understand that “these” refers to “the mountain,” “the lawns,” “the glades,” “the plumes,” etc., and that we cannot get the sense until we come to “All these he saw.” It is as if we were to write “His splen-

did work in history, his excellent work in Latin, his good work in mathematics, and his unusual excellence in manual training,—all these he received no credit for."

Turning now to the thought of Group Sequence, we see how the sense is suspended from line to line until the assertion ends the incomplete groups with "All these he saw." Now follows a simple statement, "but what he fain had seen he could not see," in which the thought is as completely finished as if the sentence were followed by a period. Then comes the phrase equivalent to the "what," complete in itself: "the kindly human voice." After this is another entire statement: "Nor ever hear a kindly voice." But after that there is suspense in the groups ending with "ocean-fowl," "reef," "zenith," "wave," "ranged," "gorge," and "sailor." *Are you following the text, page 133?*

As for Inversion, here we have an excellent illustration; and while, after noting the Sequence in the various groups, we do not need to spend much time on Inversion, yet it does help us somewhat in getting the meaning when we recognize that the opening groups are out of the order in which we should expect them; it is as if the object of a verb should begin a sentence.

Your careful preparation enables you to enjoy the scene in a way that would have been impossible without the details, and there is no reason why such a study should deprive you of one jot of pleasure in the picture. There is beauty piled on beauty: the mountain, the lawns, the glades, the coco's crown of

plumes, the flash of insect and of bird, and the glorious coloring of the tropics—all these that would have thrilled a lover of nature to Enoch are as nothing.

Now note the change: "All these he saw," but never "the kindly human face." He never heard "a kindly voice," but instead, the ocean-fowl, the roller, the whisper of huge trees, and the sweep of the rivulet,

As down the shore he ranged, or all day long  
Sat often in the seaward-gazing gorge.

From this analysis we get two large pictures: what Enoch saw—but not the kindly face; what he heard—but not the kindly voice. All the glories of form and color meant nothing to him; all the sounds of the tropical world could tell him nothing. His senses longed for human faces and human voices. The pathos of his loneliness is made the more terrible by the beauty of the nature that environs him. What his heart yearns for is a human face, a human voice; but in vain he longs:

A shipwreck'd sailor, waiting for a sail.

Has our study not brought us a rich reward? The paragraph which at first seemed so obscure and perhaps to most of us so dry, has become clear and interesting, full of life and beauty. We have learned, too, that interest does not necessarily lie in action and excitement, but, as in this case, often in the beauty of the picture described, or in sympathy aroused in us for the people in the story. Now reread the entire selection, first silently, then aloud.

## CHAPTER VIII

### GROUP MOTIVE

In the chapter on Group Sequence we learned that so long as the thought was incomplete the voice would rise at the end of the group—a rising inflection, or glide upward; and further, that when the thought was complete, when we asserted strongly, when we demanded or commanded, the voice at once responded with a downward inflection at the end of the group, whether the group was long or consisted of only a single word. In this chapter we are to discuss the subject at length.

When you ask such a question as “Are you going home?” you hear the rising tune most clearly marked on “home”; and if you were asked where you were going and you answered, “I am going home,” your melody would be decidedly downward, and the inflection would again be particularly noticeable on “home.” To make this more clear hum the two sentences. The tune is more easily recognized in humming because it is not combined with the words. Very often in simple sentences one can understand another by his tune, although he is uttering no words at all. If someone makes a remark to you which you do not catch, you may say “What did you say?” or “What?”

or just "Hm?" In every one of these cases the tune is the same (although in the first answer you used more words than in the others) and *it asks for information*. Or, let us take a tune that expresses a demand or an assertion, such as "I won't go home," or "I won't," or "No," or, what is quite common among us, just the strong murmur "M—m." In all these cases it is the tune that conveys the motive behind the words. And what a big difference in the tunes! You probably never noticed before that there were tunes in speech and that so much depended on them in speaking and reading. Now what caused you to make this difference in tune? You did not try to make it: you were not even conscious that you were doing it: you did not have to learn how to do it. The motive, the purpose, in the two cases was different, and the melody changed with the motive.

Now, what applies to these little sentences applies to every phrase or sentence you utter: *as the motive changes your melody changes with it*. We saw this in the examples under Group Sequence, but we noticed it chiefly at the end of the groups; now you see that the principle applies to every word and syllable of the group. *Speech tune or melody is just rising or falling of the voice sometimes by jumps, sometimes by slides; and is determined solely by the motive*. If we change the motive, the melody changes; if the melody changes, the audience gets a different conception with every change.

Notice the melody in “Are you going out?” How the voice seems to climb a ladder of notes like

?

t

u

o

going

you

Are

Suppose now you asked the same question of one who refuses to answer. Then you ask a second time, and again no answer; until finally you say

A

r

e

y

o

u

g

o

i

n

g

o

u

t

?

Grammatically, this is a question; but since under the circumstances it really becomes a demand, your melody runs down the ladder. You are no longer interested in the purpose of the person to whom you are speaking; you do not care, perhaps, whether he is going

out or not; but you are insisting on his saying *something*; your "Are you going out?" becomes equivalent to "Give an answer to my question. I don't care whether it be yes or no, but an answer I insist upon." Hum the sentence first as a simple question, then as a demand, and you will see more clearly than before how much the tune tells of the speaker's motive.

If a teacher asks William to rise, and John rises instead, and the teacher says, pointing first to William and then to John, "I mean you, not you,"—what a strange twisting of the melody we hear on the two "yous." Hum this sentence, too. If you were asked to describe these melodies you would be unable to do it, and yet how naturally and easily and unconsciously you used them when you wanted another to get the meaning. That peculiar twist in the tune (called a circumflex inflection—although you don't have to bother about that) was really a sign of a double meaning, as the text shows. An example from *Julius Caesar* is similar to this. Marc Antony is speaking to the mob, who believe he is going to say something in favor of the dead Caesar, whose memory, for the moment at any rate, they do not hold dear. In order to get their attention Antony says "I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him." As you read that aloud do you notice how naturally the melody glides up and down on "bury" and "praise"? Again we have the double meaning. The mob thought he was going to praise Caesar, and Antony says, No, not "praise," but "bury." When, in *The Merchant of Venice* (Act I, sc. iii), Shylock says to Antonio: "Hath a dog

money?" he is not seeking information. Antonio, who hates the Jew, has frequently called him a dog, but now he comes to Shylock and asks for a loan of money, and Shylock answers:

Hath a dog money? Is it possible  
A cur can lend three thousand ducats?

The sarcasm, the double idea as it were, in both sentences is brought out by the peculiar tune used on "dog" and "eur."

The lesson we learn from these few illustrations is that we must be exceedingly careful to get the motive, the purpose, the intention, behind every phrase, and, having it, must hold it firmly in mind as we read, so that the listener cannot possibly miss it.

Here are some examples of greater difficulty to show what difference tune makes in our vocal expression. But never forget: our principal reason for discussing this problem is to make you more careful, first in your silent reading, and then particularly in the reading aloud of poetry, drama, and novels.

In *Lancelot and Elaine*, after telling us that Elaine, the lily maid, has the shield of Lancelot, Tennyson goes on:

How came the lily maid by that good shield  
Of Lancelot, she that knew not ev'n his name?  
He left it with her, etc.

Is it the poet's purpose to ask the reader a question which he could not answer, and which the poet himself could answer? Certainly not. What is the meaning then? Supply "Do you ask me" before "How came,"

and you will get it. And it's all a matter of the motive behind the question.

Here is a similar problem. Jean Valjean has left the city and the author asks:

How long did he weep thus? What did he do after weeping? Where did he go? Nobody ever knew.

Of course the author isn't asking these questions; it is just as in the previous illustration.

In *The Merchant of Venice*, after Bassanio is supposed to have explained to Shylock that Antonio wishes to borrow three thousand ducats, for three months, Bassanio and Shylock enter as the latter says:

Three thousand ducats; well

I have purposely omitted a punctuation mark after "well." You put it in—now—and we will discuss your choice a little later on. Bassanio answers:

Ay, sir, for three months.

Shylock continues:

For three months; well

and again Bassanio retorts:

For the which, as I told you, Antonio shall be bound.

You have probably decided to put in a question mark after the "wells." Why? Because you decided Shylock's motive or intention was to indicate that he understood so far and wanted Bassanio to continue—as much as to say "I understand; go on. What next?" And the same principle applies to the second

“well.” Now if I should say this is the way to punctuate the lines :

Three thousand ducats; well.

For three months; well.

how would you interpret them? I shall leave it to you to work out, but no matter what your conclusion is, will it not be clear that it is all a matter of motive?

Brutus accuses Cassius of having “an itching palm,” and Cassius angrily replies:

I an itching palm?

You know that you are Brutus that speak this,  
Or, by the gods, this speech were else your last.

Without much doubt Cassius’ first four words and their motive can be paraphrased, “Do you dare to say to me, Cassius, that I am so low, so debased, that I would stoop to take what was not mine?” and there is a challenge in that upward sweep of the melody. But I have heard the words read with a strong downward sweep. Paraphrased, in this case the melody conveyed the idea that Cassius meant “He has used these terrible words of accusation to me!” We are not to decide whether this is the true meaning of Cassius, but to see how the motive controls the melody, and how (*and this I say again and again*) careful we must be to get the motive.

The reason why so much of our reading is dull and monotonous is largely because we do not get the motive; for, the moment we do get this the reading

becomes full of variety, vital, and interesting. See how this works out in a longer passage, from the opening lines of *Julius Caesar*.

Caesar has just returned triumphant from the wars. The citizens are in a holiday mood, laughing and talking, when one of the rulers in the city, who hates Caesar, stops them, saying:

Hence! home, you idle creatures, get you home;  
Is this a holiday?

It is an interesting experiment to read this passage without any motive except to say the words. That is, to read it in almost a monotone. How flat and dull it is! In fact, if you have any spirit in you at all, it is only with great difficulty you can keep the monotone. Now read it so as to make the citizens see just what the speaker has in mind. Note how animated the expression becomes! How alive the words are! How the voice jumps and glides up and down the scale! Read now the speeches of some of the citizens. The more you see that they are just poking fun at Flavius and Marullus, the more will animation show itself *through your tune, or melody, which you will not have to make up or study out in advance*, but which will come spontaneously, just as it comes when you are talking on the street, or on the playground, or in the house.

[*A scene in Rome. A street.*]

[*Enter Flavius, Marullus, and certain Commoners.*]

*Flav.* Hence! home, you idle creatures, get you home:  
Is this a holiday? what! know you not,  
Being mechanical, you ought not walk

Upon a labouring day without the sign  
Of your profession? Speak, what trade art thou?

*First Com.* Why, sir, a carpenter.

*Mar.* Where is thy leather apron and thy rule?  
What dost thou with thy best apparel on?  
You, sir, what trade are you?

*Sec. Com.* Truly, sir, in respect of a fine workman,  
I am but, as you would say, a cobbler.

*Mar.* But what trade art thou? answer me directly.

*Sec. Com.* A trade, sir, that, I hope, I may use with  
a safe conscience; which is, indeed, sir, a mender of  
bad soles.

*Mar.* What trade, thou knave? thou naughty knave,  
what trade?

*Sec. Com.* Nay, I beseech you, sir, be not out with  
me: yet, if you be out, sir, I can mend you.

*Mar.* What meanest thou by that? mend me, thou  
saucy fellow!

*Sec. Com.* Why, sir, cobble you.

*Flav.* Thou art a cobbler, art thou?

*Sec. Com.* Truly, sir, all that I live by is with the  
awl: I meddle with no tradesman's matters, nor women's  
matters, but with awl. I am, indeed, sir, a surgeon to  
old shoes; when they are in great danger, I recover  
them. As proper men as ever trod upon neat's leather  
have gone upon my handiwork.

*Flav.* But wherefore art not in thy shop today?  
Why dost thou lead these men about the streets?

*Sec. Com.* Truly, sir, to wear out their shoes, to get  
myself into more work. But, indeed, sir, we make  
holiday, to see Caesar and to rejoice in his triumph.

An example of unusual interest is found in the third  
act of *Othello*, where the villain Iago is trying to  
make Othello jealous of his wife Desdemona. Othello  
married Desdemona secretly, no one except Michael

Cassio knowing anything about it until it was publicly announced. With this in mind, you will be able to follow the dialogue. Particularly your attention is called to the "indeeds" and "honests." The exclamation points sometimes indicate strong assertion and at others strong emotion without necessarily implying that the remark is not a question:

*Iago.* My noble lord,—

*Oth.* What dost thou say, Iago?

*Iago.* Did Michael Cassio, when you woo'd my lady, Know of your love?

*Oth.* He did, from first to last: why dost thou ask?

*Iago.* But for a satisfaction of my thought; No further harm.

*Oth.* Why of thy thought, Iago?

*Iago.* I did not think he had been acquainted with her.

*Oth.* O, yes; and went between us very oft.

*Iago.* Indeed!

*Oth.* Indeed! ay, indeed: discern'st thou aught in that?

Is he not honest?

*Iago.* Honest, my lord?

*Oth.* Honest! ay, honest.

*Iago.* My lord, for aught I know.

*Oth.* What dost thou think?

*Iago.* Think, my lord?

*Oth.* Think, my lord!

By heaven, he echoes me,

As if there were some monster in his thought

Too hideous to be shown. Thou dost mean something:

I heard thee say even now, thou likedst not that,

When Cassio left my wife. What didst not like?

And when I told thee he was of my counsel

In my whole course of wooing, thou criedst "Indeed!"

And didst contract and purse thy brow together,

As if thou then hadst shut up in thy brain  
Some horrible conceit. If thou dost love me,  
Show me thy thought.

There are at least two ways to interpret the motive in the following question. Read it aloud:

Beneath what?

In a preceding paragraph I said that melodies dealt with jumps and glides of the voice. This is just as it is in singing. Take any melody you know and hum it quietly: "Home, Sweet Home," for instance. What makes that melody?—nothing but a series of jumps and glides. Keep this principle in mind as you hum the lines with their *speech tunes*. The difference between the speech melody and the song melody is very great and very marked. In what does it consist? Largely in the different jumps and glides. Song melodies are invented, speech melodies are instinctive, natural. No two persons would be likely to invent the same tune for given words; but there will be very little difference in the speech tunes of a *given meaning* in a thousand persons.

Here is an illustration of the way the voice jumps. Say "I will," not too emphatically, and the voice will jump upward between "I" and "will." Say the words now with greater determination, and the jump between "I" and "will" becomes longer. Now say them with the greatest possible determination, and note how the voice jumps almost a whole octave, or even more! The jump is between "I" and "will," and the glide is on "will"; and that is all there is to melody.

So you see that (1) interpretation of motive is necessary; (2) if you have the motive in mind when you speak, the tune to express that motive comes without any conscious effort on your part; (3) the audience without conscious effort get your motive through the melody; and (4) if you get no motive or the wrong motive, the audience get no sense or the wrong sense.

That writers lay considerable stress on motive is made clear from the following passages from well-known authors. If they didn't feel that characters often revealed themselves through the tunes as much as, and often more than, in the mere words, why should they go to such pains to describe the melodies? for, directly or indirectly, that is what they often do. And certainly we must interpret these melodies both for ourselves and, when we read aloud, for others.

"Oh, I know," said Priscilla, smiling sarcastically, "I know the way o' wives; they set one on to abuse their husband, and then they turn round on one and praise 'em as if they wanted to sell 'em."—ELIOT: *Silas Marner*.

"Well—stay—let me see," said Mr. Snell, like a docile clairvoyante, who would really not make a mistake if she could help it.—*Ibid.*

Mr. Macey has been advising Silas to get a suit of Sunday clothes, and continues:

And as for the money for the suit o' clothes, why, you get a matter of a pound a week at your weaving, Master Marner, and you're a young man, eh, for all

you look so mushed. Why, you couldn't ha' been five-and-twenty when you come into these parts, eh?

Then the author adds:

Silas started a little at the change to a questioning tone.—*Ibid.*

In some of the following illustrations the authors speak of the emotion as well as the Motive; but you should take care to discriminate between them. The emotion affects the quality of your voice while Motive affects the tune. Although the passage be emotional its motive might be differently interpreted were it not for the authors' comment.

The next three excerpts are from Ruskin's *King of the Golden River*:

"How did he get in?" roared Schwartz.

"My dear brother," said Gluck, deprecatingly, "he was so very wet!"

"Who are you, sir?" demanded Schwartz, turning upon him.

"Wouldn't it, sir?" said Gluck, very mildly and submissively indeed.

"No," said the dwarf, conclusively. "No, it wouldn't."

She disappears under the shed where the fat cattle have already hastened, and soon her voice is heard, as she caressingly talks with the cow buffalo.

"Won't you stand still!--There, there, now! there, old lady!"—TOLSTOI: *The Cossacks*.

(If it were not for "caressingly," how different would your melody be on "Won't you stand still!")

"You are most kind, sir," he said with mock politeness. "But madame, my wife, has not done well to interest a stranger in this affair."—DAVIS: *There Were Ninety and Nine*.

"*It does the boots and shoes,*" the Gryphon replied very solemnly.

Alice was thoroughly puzzled. "Does the boots and shoes!" she repeated in a wondering tone.—CARROLL: *Alice in Wonderland*.

The following are from George Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss*:

"It wasn't," said Tom, loudly and peremptorily. "You give me the halfpenny: I've won it fair."

"Well," said Mr. Riley, in an admonitory patronizing tone, as he patted Maggie on the head, "I advise you to put by the 'History of the Devil,' and read some prettier book. Have you no prettier books?"

"Oh, *I* say nothing," said Mrs. Glegg, sarcastically. "My advice has never been asked, and I don't give it."

"Well, I don't know what fault you've got to find wi' me, Mr. Tulliver," said Mr. Moss deprecatingly: "I know there isn't a day-laborer works harder."

"My little lady, where are you going to?" the gypsy said, in a tone of coaxing deference.

"I don't want to wear a bonnet," Maggie said; "I'd rather wear a red handkerchief like yours" (looking at her friend by her side). "My hair was quite long till yesterday, when I cut it off; but I dare say it will grow again very soon," she added apologetically, thinking the gypsies had a strong prejudice in favor of long hair.

Mr. Glegg paused from his porridge and looked up—not with any new amazement, but simply with that quiet, habitual wonder with which we regard constant mysteries.

“Why, Mrs. G., what have I done now?”

“Done now, Mr. Glegg? *done now?* . . . . I’m sorry for you.”

“Don’t lower yourself with using coarse language to *me*, Mr. Glegg! It makes you look very small, though you can’t see yourself,” said Mrs. Glegg, in a tone of energetic compassion. “A man in your place should set an example, and talk more sensible.”

“Yes; but will you listen to sense?” retorted Mr. Glegg, sharply.

“Go, go!” said Mr. Tulliver, reprovingly, “you mustn’t say so. You must learn what your master tells you. He knows what it’s right for you to learn.”

“And you don’t mind that?” said Tom, with strong curiosity.

“No, no, Maggie,” said Tom, in his most coaxing tone, “it’s something you’ll like *ever so.*”

## CHAPTER IX

### CENTRAL IDEA

We have learned that speech tune depends on motive; but if we listen a little more closely to the melody we shall find there is a certain word or words in every group standing out prominently above all others. Observe this in one of the groups we have had:

*Hath a dog money?*

And this is true in all groups: there is a center around which the thought revolves. When Shylock retorts, “*Hath a dog money?*” it is the “*dog*” which is, as it were, in the center of his thoughts, but if he were discussing the features of a dog he might say, “*and a dog hath eyes, ears, and mouth, but hath a dog money?*” In that case the centers would be “*eyes*,” “*ears*,” “*mouth*,” and particularly “*money*.”

Motive and Central Idea have much in common. One can almost say that if we get the right Motive the Central Idea will take care of itself. But this is not by any means always true. Motive deals with continuity, assertion, question, doubt, etc., but one can assert or question concerning the *wrong Central Idea*. For instance: the elder brother of the prodigal son is annoyed that his father should kill the fatted

calf in honor of the return of the prodigal, who has come home only after squandering all his money; and the elder son, who has stayed at home and saved his money, says angrily to the father:

Lo, these many years do I serve thee and I never transgressed a commandment of thine; and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends: but when this thy son eame, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou killedst for him the fatted calf.

Now as to the Motive there can be no doubt: note the assertiveness in almost every sentence of the elder son's remarks to the old father. But what of the Central Idea within that motive? (There are many words here that stand out prominently, but for our present purpose we confine ourselves to two.) How have you read the lines? Let the class debate on these two interpretations:

- (1) and yet thou never gavest *me* a kid, that I might make merry with my friends;
- (2) and yet thou never gavest me a *kid*, that I might make merry with my friends.

The Motive is the same in both cases, but what a great difference in the Central Ideas!

Count slowly, mechanically, and assertively from one to ten:

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

In saying these numbers you have no motive but assertion in counting from one to ten. If you were looking forward to the end after each numeral you would

have used unconsciously an upward glide on every one but the last. Now let us suppose that I misunderstood your counting and criticized you, saying,

“You said, 1, 2, 3, *three*, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10,”

and you answered,

“I didn’t. I said, 1, 2, 3, *four*, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.”

Here you had an entirely different Central Idea. You were not thinking of counting up to ten, but of telling me that you had not omitted the “four.” In other words, your Central Idea was the “four.” This same principle will be noted in the following:

I am going to school tomorrow.

If I say to you, “*Who* is going to school tomorrow?” you answer,

I am going to school tomorrow.

If I am trying to stop you from going, and say you shall not go, then you will answer,

I am going to school tomorrow.

Should I ask you *where* you are going, you would say,

I am going to *school* tomorrow.

And, finally, if there should be a doubt as to the day, you would clear it up by,

I am going to school *tomorrow*.

In every one of these cases your Central Idea changed, while the motive of assertion remained the same; you

had a very definite and different Central Idea in mind every time: to correct a wrong impression, or to make very emphatic what you had to say. Since I doubted your determination to go, you replied strongly, “*I am going.*” Or, again, since I thought you were going next week or next month, you set me right by saying, “*I am going tomorrow.*” That is, your Central Idea affected very decidedly your way of speaking and you didn’t have to stop to consider how to bring out your Central Idea in the reading any more than you do in everyday conversation.

Here is a discussion of work and worry. Many people claim that too much work is deadly. To these Henry Ward Beecher says:

It is not work that kills men; it is worry. Work is healthy; you can hardly put more upon a man than he can bear. Worry is rust upon the blade. It is not the revolution that destroys machinery, but the friction.

To review: in the preceding paragraphs the term Central Idea was used several times. To be certain we know just what it means let us go back. When you said “*1, 2, 3, four,*” etc., the Central Idea was to get the person to see that you had said “*four*” and not “*three.*” You might have expressed your Central Idea by saying, “The numeral after ‘three’ was ‘four.’” And in the sentence “*I am going to school tomorrow*” you meant to express determination that in spite of opposition you were determined to go to school. And this was your Central Idea. When the man who had called Shylock a dog wished to borrow

money from him, Shylock's Central Idea was to remind Antonio in a sarcastic way that a man who is only a dog is hardly the one to lend money. Paraphrased, his question might read "Can such a miserable creature as a *dog* help you?" And in the last illustration Beecher's Central Idea is to contradict those who claim that work kills by showing them it is worry that does it. In his first sentence, therefore, the Central Idea consists of a contrast between "work" and "worry"; just as in the concluding sentence the antithesis between "revolution" and "friction" is the Central Idea.

I have purposely chosen sentences in which by reason of contrast the Central Idea stands out vividly. But, after all, contrasts are the exception, not the rule. Every sentence, one might say every group, has its center, and to determine what that is is generally not difficult, and especially it should not be for those who have been studying the preceding chapters. One can go further and say one need give but little attention *consciously* to the Central Idea; it takes care of itself in ninety-five cases in a hundred where the reader understands the meaning of the words; but in the other five per cent it is of the utmost importance, as the following illustrations will prove. The first example is from a speech of Patrick Henry, who is replying to a speaker who has been pleading for peace on the ground that the young colonies are too weak to attack the mother country. Attention is drawn to the Central Ideas by italics, but students must remember it is *ideas* that are to be *brought out*, not *words* to

be *emphasized*. And I have purposely italicized only those words which seem to convey the essentials. The others the student will discover for himself:

Sir, we are *not* weak, if we make a proper use of those means which the God of nature hath placed in our power. *Three millions of people*, armed in the holy cause of *liberty*, and in a country such as that which *we* possess, are *invincible* by *any* force which our enemy can send *against* us. *Besides*, sir, we shall not fight our battles *alone*. There is a *just God* who presides over the destinies of nations, and who will raise up friends to fight our battles for us. The battle, sir, is not to the *strong alone*; it is to the *vigilant*, the *active*, the *brave*. Besides, sir, we have no *election*. If we were *base* enough to *desire* it, it is now *too late to retire* from the *contest*. There is *no* retreat but in *submission* and *slavery*! Our chains are *forged*! Their *clanking* may be heard on the plains of *Boston*! The war is *inevitable*—and let it *come*! I repeat it, sir, let it *come*!

It is in *vain*, sir, to *extenuate* the matter. Gentlemen may cry, *Peace, peace!*—but there *is* no peace. The war is actually *begun*! The next gale that sweeps from the north will bring to our ears the clash of resounding arms! Our *brethren* are *already* in the *field*! Why stand *we* here *idle*? What is it that gentlemen *wish*? What would they *have*? Is *life* so *dear*, or *peace* so *sweet*, as to be purchased at the price of *chains* and *slavery*? *Forbid* it, Almighty God! I know not what course *others* may take; but as for *me*, give me *liberty* or give me *death*!—PATRICK HENRY.

Or again; Shylock is about to claim his pound of flesh of Antonio, and a friend of Antonio says:

Salarino.—Why, I am sure, if he forfeit, thou wilt not take his flesh: what's that good for?

*Shylock*.—To bait fish withal: if it will feed nothing else, it will feed my *revenge*. He hath *disgraced* me, and *hindered* me *half a million*; *laughed* at my *losses*, *mocked* at my *gains*, *scorned* my *nation*, *thwarted* my *bargains*, *cooled* my *friends*, *heated* mine *enemies*; and what's his *reason*? I am a *Jew*. Hath not a *Jew* *eyes*? hath not a *Jew* *hands*, *organs*, *dimensions*, *senses*, *affections*, *passions*? fed with the *same food*, hurt with the *same weapons*, *subject* to the *same diseases*, *healed* by the *same means*, *warmed* and *cooled* by the *same winter* and *summer*, as a *Christian* is? If you *prick* us, do we not *bleed*? if you *tickle* us, do we not *laugh*? if you *poison* us, do we not *die*? and if you *wrong* us, shall we not *revenge*? If we are *like* you in the *rest*, we will *resemble* you in *that*. If a *Jew* wrong a *Christian*, what is his *humility*? *Revenge*. If a *Christian* wrong a *Jew*, what should *his sufferance* be by *Christian example*? Why, *revenge*. The *villany* you *teach* me, I will *execute*, and it shall go *hard*, but I will *better* the *instruction*.—*The Merchant of Venice*, III, i.

I have indicated in the following passages what appear to be the Central Ideas. (Only the *more important* parts of the *most important* of the groups are italicized.) Let the student study them carefully and give his reasons for accepting or rejecting the suggested interpretation. But it must not be taken for granted that because a word is italicized it necessarily means that it must be uttered with more than usual force. Sometimes, of course, the Central Idea is brought out by mere force; but my purpose in italicizing words is merely to suggest that they are that part of the sentence which expresses the Central Idea. Let the student get that, and the means of bringing it out need not concern him.

Selections from *Julius Caesar*:

I come to *bury* Caesar, not to *praise* him.

Let us be *sacrificers*, but not *butchers*.

*Marullus*.—You *blocks*, you *stones*, you *worse* than  
senseless things!

O you *hard hearts*, you *cruel* men of Rome,  
Knew you not *Pompey*? Many a time and oft  
Have you climb'd up to *walls* and *battlements*,  
To *towers* and *windows*, yea, to *chimney-tops*,  
Your *infants* in your *arms*, and there have sat  
The live-long day, with patient expectation,  
To see great Pompey pass the streets of Rome!

—*Julius Caesar*, I, i.

*Casca*.—'Tis *Caesar* that you mean; is it *not*, *Cassius*?

*Cassius*.—Let it be who it *is*: for Romans now  
Have *thews* and *limbs* like to their *ancestors*;  
But, woe the while! our *fathers' minds* are *dead*,  
And we are govern'd with our *mothers' spirits*;  
Our *yoke* and *sufferance* show us *womanish*.

—*Ibid.*, I, iii.

*Decius*.—Caesar, all hail! Good morrow, worthy *Caesar*;  
I come to fetch you to the senate-house.

*Caesar*.—And you are come in very happy time  
To bear my greeting to the senators,  
And tell them that I will not *come* today.  
*Cannot* is *false*; and that I *dare* not, *falser*;  
I *will* not come today: tell them so, *Decius*.

—*Ibid.*, II, ii.

*Cassius*.—Most noble brother, you have done me *wrong*.

*Brutus*.—Judge me, you gods! Wrong I mine *enemies*?  
And, if not *so*, how should I wrong a *brother*?

IV, ii.

*Cassius*.—You love me not.

*Brutus*.—I do not like your *faults*.

*Cassius*.—A *friendly* eye could never *see* such faults.

*Brutus*.—A *flatterer's* would not, though they do appear  
As huge as high Olympus. IV, iii.

Selections from *The Merchant of Venice*:

*Antonio*.—In sooth, I know not why I am so sad:  
It *wearies* me; you say it *wearies you*;  
But how I *caught* it, *found* it, or *came* by it,  
What stuff 'tis *made* of, whereof it is *born*,  
I am to *learn*.

(Would you prefer to read “it *wearies ME*”?  
Why?)

*Bassanio*.—Gratiano speaks an *infinite deal of nothing*, more than *any* man in *all* Venice. His reasons are as *two grains of wheat hid in two bushels of chaff*: you shall seek *all day* ere you *find* them; and when you *have* them, they are *not worth the search*.

*Shylock*.—Three thousand ducats for three months and Antonio bound.

*Bassanio*.—Your answer to that.

*Shylock*.—Antonio is a *good* man.

*Bassanio*.—Have you heard any imputation to the *contrary*?

*Shylock*.—Oh! no, no, no, no:—my meaning in saying he is a *good* man is to have you understand me that he is *sufficient*: yet his means are in *supposition*: he hath an argosy bound to *Tripolis*, another to the *Indies*; I understand, moreover, upon the Rialto, he hath a *third* at *Mexico*, a *fourth* for *England*, and *other* ventures he hath, *squandered abroad*. But *ships* are but *boards*, *sailors* but *men*: there be *land-rats* and *water-rats*, *water-thieves* and *land-thieves*, I mean *pirates*, and then there

is the peril of waters, winds and rocks. The man is, notwithstanding, *sufficient*. *Three thousand ducats*; I think I may take his bond.

*Bassanio*.—Be assured you may.

*Skylock*.—I will be assured I may; and, that I may be assured, I will bethink me.

—I, iii.

*Gratiano*.—Now, by my hood, a Gentile and no Jew.

*Lorenzo*.—Beshrew me, but I love her heartily;

For she is wise, if I can judge of her,

And fair she is, if that mine eyes be true,

And true she is, as she hath proved herself;

—II, vi.

*Bassanio*.— Sweet Portia,

If you did know to whom I gave the ring,

If you did know for whom I gave the ring,

And would conceive for what I gave the ring,

And how unwillingly I left the ring,

When nought would be accepted but the ring,

You would abate the strength of your displeasure.

—V, i.

Man, who art thou who dost deny my words?

Truth sits upon the lips of dying men,

And falsehood, while I lived, was far from mine.

—ARNOLD: *Sohrab and Rustum*.

*Thou* dost not slay me, proud and boastful man!

*No!* *Rustum* slays me, and this filial heart.

For were I match'd with ten such men as thee,

And I were that which till today I was,

*They* should be lying here, I standing there.

—Ibid.

Neither a borrower nor a lender be.

Kings will be tyrants from policy when subjects are rebels from principle.

Study the following excerpts for the Central Idea.  
Then read aloud:

A lie which is all a lie, may be met and fought with  
outright,

But a lie which is part a truth is a harder matter to fight.

—TENNYSON: *The Grandmother.*

None dared withstand him to his face,  
But one sly maiden spake aside:  
"The little witch is evil-eyed,  
Her mother only killed a cow,  
Or witched a churn, or dairy-pan,  
But she, forsooth, must charm a man."

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard  
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on.

—KEATS: *Ode on a Grecian Urn.*

To reign is worth ambition, though in hell;  
Better to reign in hell, than serve in heaven!

—MILTON: *Paradise Lost.*

*Sir Peter.* Very well, ma'am, very well! So a husband is to have no influence—no authority!

*Lady Teazle.* Authority? No, to be sure! If you wanted authority over me, you should have adopted me, and not married me; I am sure you were old enough!

—SHERIDAN: *The School for Scandal.*

We live in deeds, not years; in thought, not breath;  
In feelings, not in figures on a dial;  
We should count time by heart-throbs. He most lives,  
Who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best.

—BAILEY: *Festus.*

Miss Kindly is aunt to everybody, and has been so long that none remember to the contrary. The little children love her; she helped their grandmothers to bridal ornaments three-score years ago.—PARKER.

And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.—**THE BIBLE.**

We spend our years like a tale that is told. The days of our years are three score years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be four-score years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.—**THE BIBLE.**

For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in.

Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.—**THE BIBLE.**

Crabbed age and youth cannot live together:  
Youth is full of pleasance, age is full of care;  
Youth like summer morn, age like winter weather;  
Youth like summer brave, age like winter bare.  
Youth is full of sport, age's breath is short;  
Youth is nimble, age is lame;  
Youth is hot and bold, age is weak and cold;  
Youth is wild, and age is tame.  
Age, I do abhor thee; youth, I do adore thee;  
O, my love, my love is young!  
Age, I do defy thee: O, sweet shepherd, hie thee,  
For methinks thou stay'st too long.

—SHAKESPEARE: *The Passionate Pilgrim.*

*Touchstone.* How old are you, friend?

*William.* Five and twenty, sir.

*Touchstone.* A ripe age. Is thy name William?

*William.* William, sir.

*Touchstone.* A fair name. Wast born i' the forest here?

*William.* Ay, sir, I thank God.

*Touchstone.* "Thank God"; a good answer. Art rich?

*William.* Faith, sir, so so.

*Touchstone.* "So so" is good, very good,—very excellent good: and yet it is not; it is but so so.

—*As You Like It*, V, i.

*Othello.* . . . she thank'd me,  
And bade me, if I had a friend that loved her,  
I should but teach him how to tell my story,  
And that would woo her. On this hint I spake:  
She loved me for the dangers I had passed,  
And I loved her that she did pity them.  
This only is the witchcraft which I have used.

—*Othello*, I, iii.

*Salisbury.* Therefore, to be possess'd with double  
pomp,  
To guard a title that was rich before,  
To gild refined gold, to paint the lily,  
To throw a perfume on the violet,  
To smooth the ice, or add another hue  
Unto the rainbow, or with taper-light  
To seek the beauteous eye of heaven to garnish,  
Is wasteful and ridiculous excess.

—*King John*, IV, ii.

*Brutus.* He hath the falling sickness.

*Cassius.* No, Caesar hath it not; but you and I,  
And honest Casca, we have the falling sickness.

—*Julius Caesar*, I, ii.

*Cassius.* And this man  
Is now become a god, and Cassius is  
A wretched creature and must bend his body,  
If Caesar carelessly but nod on him.  
He had a fever when he was in Spain,  
And when the fit was on him, I did mark

How he did shake: 'tis true, this god did shake:  
His coward lips did from their color fly;  
And that same eye whose bend doth awe the world  
Did lose his lustre. —*Ibid.*

*Brutus.* That you do love me, I am nothing jealous;  
What you would work me to, I have some aim;  
How I have thought of this and of these times,  
I shall recount hereafter; for this present,  
I would not, so with love I might entreat you,  
Be any further moved. What you have said  
I will consider; what you have to say  
I will with patience hear, and find a time  
Both meet to hear and answer such high things.

—*Julius Caesar*, I, ii.

*Casca.* I can as well be hanged as tell the manner of it: it was mere foolery; I did not mark it. I saw Mark Antony offer him a crown;—yet 'twas not a crown neither, 'twas one of these coronets;—and, as I told you, he put it by once; but for all that, to my thinking, he would fain have had it. Then he offered it to him again; then he put it by again; but, to my thinking, he was very loath to lay his fingers off it. And then he offered it a third time; he put it the third time by: and still as he refused it, the rabblement hooted, and clapped their chapped hands, and threw up their sweaty night-caps, and uttered such a deal of stinking breath because Caesar refused the crown, that it had almost choked Caesar; for he swounded and fell down at it.—*Ibid.*

*Messala.* It is but change, Titinius; for Octavius  
Is overthrown by noble Brutus' power,  
As Cassius' legions are by Antony.

*Titinius.* These tidings will well comfort Cassius.

*Messala.* Is not that he that lies upon the ground?

*Titinius.* He lies not like the living. Oh my heart!

*Messala.* Is not that he?

*Titinius.* No, this was he, Messala,  
But Cassius is no more,—O setting sun,  
As in thy red rays thou dost sink to night,  
So in his red blood Cassius' day is set;  
The sun of Rome is set! Our day is gone;  
Clouds, dews, and dangers come; our deeds are done!  
Mistrust of my success hath done this deed.

—*Ibid.*, V, iii.

## CHAPTER X

### GROUP MOTIVE AND CENTRAL IDEA

The student cannot get too much practice in applying the lessons he has learned in the two preceding chapters. Literature wastes no words; every word, every group counts, and in no part of reading is attention and constant vigilance so necessary as in the study of Motive and of Central Idea.

The Central Idea may be shifted without changing the Motive; and the Motive may change and leave the Central Idea the same.

For instance: here is a case where the Motive is the same while the Central Idea changes:

*Are you going out today?*

*Are you going out today?*

Both ask a question, but the point of view differs. Let us now keep the same point of view while changing the Motive:

*Are you going out today? (Won't you please answer?)*

*Are you going out today? (Stop your quibbling about other people: tell me whether you are going out.)*

*Assert* the speaker's Central Idea in the two following sentences:

*I am always right!*

*I am always right!*

The Motive of assertion remains the same but the Central Idea changes in each sentence. Now change the Motive successively on the four words to one of contrast (which is suggested by the parenthetical remark). Keep the contrast in mind while reading aloud.

*I* (not you) am always right!

*I am* (in spite of your denying it) always right!

*I am always* (not occasionally) right!

*I am always right* (not in doubt)!

You have noticed not merely a shift in the Central Idea, but a peculiar change in the tune in each reading. But (and it is highly important to know this) the student who studies carefully the Motive in each group will not be likely to miss the Central Idea.

As we leave these subjects it should be emphasized that while every group has its Central Idea, all Central Ideas in a given sentence are not necessarily of equal importance. Or, to put it otherwise, there is likely to be in every sentence one dominant idea, and it is to the discovery of that that all your attention should be directed. The student should study carefully all the passages in this chapter, laying great stress on determining the Motive and Central Idea in every sentence.

The mountain and the squirrel  
Had a quarrel;  
And the former called the latter "Little Prig."  
Bun replied,  
"You are doubtless very big;  
But all sorts of things and weather  
Must be taken in together,

To make up a year  
And a sphere.  
And I think it no disgrace  
To occupy my place.  
If I'm not so large as you,  
You are not so small as I,  
And not half so spry.  
I'll not deny you make  
A very pretty squirrel track;  
Talents differ; all is well and wisely put;  
If I cannot carry forests on my back,  
Neither can you crack a nut."

—EMERSON: *The Mountain and the Squirrel.*

And when the middle of the afternoon came, from being a poor poverty-stricken boy in the morning, Tom Sawyer was literally rolling in wealth. He had, beside the things before mentioned, twelve marbles, part of a jew's-harp, a piece of blue-bottle glass, to look through, a spool cannon, a key that wouldn't unlock anything, a fragment of chalk, a glass-stopper of a decanter, a tin soldier, a couple of tadpoles, six fire-crackers, a kitten with only one eye, a brass door-knob, a dog-collar—but no dog, the handle of a knife, four pieces of orange-peel, and a dilapidated old window-sash.—MARK TWAIN: *Tom Sawyer.*

Oh, tell me, where did Katy live?  
And what did Katy do?  
And was she very fair and young,  
And yet so wicked, too?  
Did Katy love a naughty man,  
Or kiss more cheeks than one?  
I warrant Katy did no more  
Than many a Kate has done.

—O. W. HOLMES.

External heat and cold had little influence on Scrooge. No warmth could warm, nor wintry weather chill him. No wind that blew was bitterer than he, no falling snow was more intent upon its purpose, no pelting rain less open to entreaty.—DICKENS: *A Christmas Carol*.

*Corin.* . . . I know the more one sickens the worse at ease he is; and that he that wants money, means and content is without three good friends; that the property of rain is to wet and fire to burn; that good pasture makes fat sheep, and that a great cause of the night is lack of the sun; that he that hath learned no wit by nature nor art may complain of good breeding or comes of a very dull kindred.—*As You Like It*, III, ii.

I had begun to nurse a good deal of pride in presiding over a table whereon was the fruit of my own industry. I thought I had something to do with those vegetables. But when I saw Polly seated at her side of the table, presiding over the new and susceptible vegetables, flanked by the squash and the beans, and smiling upon the green corn and the new potatoes, as cool as the cucumbers which lay sliced in ice before her, and when she began to dispense the fresh dishes, I saw at once that the day of my destiny was over. You would have thought that she owned all the vegetables, and had raised them all from their earliest years. Such quiet, vegetable airs! Such gracious appropriation! At length I said:

“Polly, do you know who planted that squash, or those squashes?”

“James, I suppose.”

“Well, yes; perhaps James did plant them to a certain extent. But who hoed them?”

“We did.”

“*We did!*” I said in the most sarcastic manner. “And I suppose *we* put on the sackcloth and ashes when the

striped bug came at four o'clock A. M., and we watched the tender leaves, and watered night and morning the feeble plants. I tell you, Polly," said I, uncorking the vinegar, "there is not a pea here that does not represent a drop of moisture wrung from my brow, nor a beet that does not stand for a back-ache, nor a squash that has not caused me untold anxiety; and I did hope—but I will say no more."—WARNER: *My Summer in a Garden.*

Fair are the flowers and the children, but their subtle suggestion is fairer;  
Rare is the rose-burst of dawn, but the secret that clasps it is rarer;  
Sweet the exultance of song, but the strain that precedes it is sweeter;  
And never was poem yet writ, but the meaning outmastered the meter.

Never a daisy that grows, but a mystery guideth the growing;  
Never a river that flows, but a majesty scepters the flowing;  
Never a Shakespeare that soared, but a stronger than he did enfold him;  
Never a prophet foretells, but a mightier seer hath foretold him.

—REALF: *Indirection.*

(It would appear that the preferable interpretation is to regard the clauses that begin the first three lines of the above as complete in themselves. Yet the poet might have taken for granted that everyone accepted the truth in those clauses, as if to say "Although everyone agrees that," etc. The melody will show how you regard this.)

*Iago.* Who steals my purse steals trash; 'tis some-  
thing, nothing;  
'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands;  
But he that filches from me my good name  
Robs me of that which not enriches him  
And makes me poor indeed.

—*Othello*, III, iii.

*Hamlet.* Indeed, indeed, sirs, but this troubles me.  
Hold you the watch to-night?

*Marcellus* }  
*Bernardo* } We do, my lord.

*Hamlet.* Arm'd, say you?

*Marcellus* }  
*Bernardo* } Arm'd, my lord.

*Hamlet.* From top to toe?

*Marcellus* }  
*Bernardo* } My lord, from head to foot.

*Hamlet.* Then saw you not his face?

*Horatio.* O, yes, my lord; he wore his beaver up.

*Hamlet.* What, look'd he frowningly?

*Horatio.* A countenance more in sorrow than in anger.

*Hamlet.* Pale or red?

*Horatio.* Nay, very pale.

*Hamlet.* And fix'd his eyes upon you?

*Horatio.* Most constantly.

*Hamlet.* I would I had been there.

*Horatio.* It would have much amazed you.

*Hamlet.* Very like, very like. Stay'd it long?

*Horatio.* While one with moderate haste might tell a  
hundred.

*Marcellus* }  
*Bernardo* } Longer, longer.

*Horatio.* Not when I saw 't.

*Hamlet.* His beard was grizzled,—no?

*Horatio.* It was, as I have seen it in his life,  
A sable silver'd.

*Hamlet.* I will watch to-night;  
Perchance 'twill walk again.

—*Hamlet*, I, ii.

*Portia.* By my troth, Nerissa, my little body is  
a-weary of this great world.

*Nerissa.* You would be, sweet madam, if your miseries  
were in the same abundance as your good fortunes are:  
and yet, for aught I see, they are as sick that surfeit  
with too much as they that starve with nothing. It is no  
mean happiness, therefore, to be seated in the mean:  
superfluity comes sooner by white hairs, but competency  
lives longer.

*Portia.* Good sentences and well pronounced.

*Nerissa.* They would be better, if well followed.

*Portia.* If to do were as easy as to know what were  
good to do, chapels had been churches and poor men's  
cottages princes' palaces. It is a good divine that fol-  
lows his own instructions: I can easier teach twenty  
what were good to be done, than be one of the twenty to  
follow mine own teaching. The brain may devise laws  
for the blood, but a hot temper leaps o'er a cold decree:  
such a hare is madness the youth, to skip o'er the meshes  
of good counsel the cripple. But this reasoning is not  
in the fashion to choose me a husband. O me, the word  
"choose!" I may neither choose whom I would nor re-  
fuse whom I dislike; so is the will of a living daughter  
curbed by the will of a dead father. Is it not hard,  
Nerissa, that I cannot choose one nor refuse none?—

*The Merchant of Venice*, I, ii.

*Portia.* Go draw aside the curtains and discover  
The several caskets to this noble prince.  
Now make your choice.

*Morocco.* The first, of gold, who this inscription  
bears,

"Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire";  
 The second, silver, which this promise carries,  
 "Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves";  
 This third, dull lead, with warning all as blunt,  
 "Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath."  
 How shall I know if I do choose the right?

*Portia.* The one of them contains my picture, prince:  
 If you choose that, then I am yours withal.

*Morocco.* Some god direct my judgment! Let me  
 see;

I will survey the inscriptions back again.

What says this leaden casket?

"Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath."

Must give: for what? for lead? hazard for lead?

This casket threatens. Men that hazard all

Do it in hope of fair advantages:

A golden mind stoops not to show of dross;

I'll then nor give nor hazard aught for lead.

What says the silver with her virgin hue?

"Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves."

As much as he deserves! Pause there, Morocco,

And weigh thy value with an even hand:

If thou be'st rated by thy estimation,

Thou dost deserve enough; and yet enough

May not extend so far as to the lady:

And yet to be afeard of my deserving

Were but a weak disabling of myself.

As much as I deserve! Why, that's the lady:

I do in birth deserve her, and in fortunes,

In graces and in qualities of breeding;

But more than these, in love I do deserve.

What if I stray'd no further, but chose here?

—*Ibid.*

*Morocco.* Let's see once more this saying graved in gold;

"Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire."

Why, that's the lady; all the world desires her;

From the four corners of the earth they come,

To kiss this shrinc, this mortal-breathing saint:

The Hyrcanian deserts and the vasty wilds

Of wide Arabia are as throughfares now

For princes to come view fair Portia:

The watery kingdom, whose ambitious head

Spits in the face of heaven, is no bar

To stop the foreign spirits, but they come,

As o'er a brook, to see fair Portia.

One of these three contains her heavenly picture.

Is't like that lead contains her? 'Twere damnation

To think so base a thought: it were too gross

To rib her cerecloth in the obscure grave.

Or shall I think in silver she's immured,

Being ten times undervalued to tried gold?

O sinful thought! Never so rich a gem

Was set in worse than gold. They have in England

A coin that bears the figure of an angel

Stamped in gold, but that's insculp'd upon;

But here an angel in a golden bed

Lies all within. Deliver me the key:

Here do I choose, and thrive I as I may!

—*Ibid.*, II, vii.

## CHAPTER XI

### PUNCTUATION

They tell a story in Germany of the principal of a high school who entered a classroom when the teacher of English was giving a lesson in punctuation, and particularly on the use of the comma. The principal did not believe in this kind of instruction and told the teacher so, who, after the principal had gone, wrote these words on the blackboard:

The teacher says the principal is a fool.

When the principal saw the teacher again he was very angry and said, "What do you mean by calling me a fool?" and the principal wrote the sentence on the blackboard. The teacher replied, "Oh, yes, that's what I wrote; but you said, Mr. Principal, that commas didn't make any difference, so I paid no attention to them; but if you had not objected I should have written the sentence like this:

The teacher, says the principal, is a fool!"

From this little story one can learn how important even a comma may be. True, carelessness in the use of the comma will not always make as much difference as it did in the story, but if you are to interpret the printed page accurately you must bear in mind that

those who write use marks of punctuation with great care, and their object is to help us get the meaning with as little effort as possible—at least as far as punctuation *can* help. Note, too, what a great difference the commas make in our vocal expression. It is not a question of pausing either, for whether you pause or not after “teacher” and after “principal,” unless you see that the commas indicate that the phrase “says the principal” is subordinate you will give the wrong impression to your listener. Now read aloud these two sentences:

Playing children are happy.

Playing, children are happy.

Here again you see how great a difference in the meaning is made by the comma, and how naturally your vocal expression changes according to the presence or absence of the comma.

Another very interesting example is:

I received another letter, from New York, yesterday.

If you take out the commas, does it make any difference? If you think it does, then read the sentence aloud, showing two interpretations. That sentence is taken from a long correspondence between two firms, which threatened at one time to lead to a serious business complication. It would take too long to explain the circumstances, but as an exercise invent conditions wherein the omission of the commas might make a great deal of trouble in certain business negotiations.

The exercise is far more worth while than the simplicity of the task seems to indicate.

In the next passage how great a difference is made in the sense and the vocal expression because of the commas:

On this shelf put books and magazines published in 1910.

On this shelf put books, and magazines published in 1910.

Punctuation points are to assist the reader to understand the writer's meaning. In studying composition, students learn something of punctuation, but experience forces me to believe that most of them fall far short of mastering even the simplest principles. Consequently when it comes to interpreting the printed page, the punctuation is often ignored or entirely misunderstood. One overlooks the fact that writers, and especially those whose work is called literature, employ punctuation with greatest care and discrimination: to overlook it is often to fail to get the meaning.

#### INTERPRETATION OF THE COMMA

In the introductory paragraphs I called your attention to the important part a comma could play in a simple sentence. Now note how the comma helps you to get the meaning rather more quickly and with greater certainty than you could if it were omitted. Punctuation points are frequently so used. To repeat: first, they prevent misinterpretation; secondly, they help us to get the interpretation more quickly.

The father of William says Frank compelled him to keep at his studies.

Can you understand that? And again:

“The father of William,” says Frank, “compelled him to keep at his studies.”

Leaving the quotation marks out of consideration, what a striking effect is produced by those little commas!

Does not the comma in the second of the next sentences spare you the necessity of a second reading?

Although genius commands admiration character most commands respect.

Although genius commands admiration, character most commands respect.

Note how commas help in the next passage:

In youth we lay the foundation, in mature years we build the structure, of a life.

Recognizing that “of a life” modifies “foundation” as well as “structure” (which we are helped to do by the commas) see how our vocal expression brings out the meaning.

What difference do you note in these two sentences? Read them aloud:

The house of Gordon the baker was robbed.

The house of Gordon, the baker, was robbed.

In *Julius Caesar*, Brutus says to Cassius, with whom he has been engaged in a long conversation about Caesar:

But, look you, Cassius,  
The angry spot doth glow on Caesar's brow.

Change the punctuation thus and see the difference:

But, look, you Cassius, etc.

But look, you Cassius, etc.

But look you, Cassius, etc.

(What does "but" mean in the second and third sentences?)

In the same play Cassius is trying to find out whether Casca will join the conspiracy to kill Caesar, and pretends that it suddenly occurs to him that Casca may be a friend of Caesar's, and that, consequently, Casca may tell Caesar. Then Casca says:

You speak to Casca, and to such a man  
That is no fleering tell-tale. Hold, my hand.

Twice have I seen actors thrust out their hand to Cassius and read the words thus:

Hold my hand.

Very good sense, but in this case, nonsense.

There is a rule of punctuation which reads something like this: "When two or more words in the same construction are connected by *and*, *or*, or *nor*, no comma must be placed between them"; and such an example as the following is given:

He was told that his home and his farm and his store were to be taken from him.

And for all practical purposes the rule suffices: the sense is quite clear without commas; but why do the writers of the following excerpts violate this principle?

Who to the enraptured heart, and ear, and eye  
Teach beauty, virtue, truth, and love, and melody.

Saying with a great voice, Worthy is the Lamb that hath been slain to receive the power, and the riches, and wisdom, and might, and honor, and glory, and blessing. And every created thing which is in the heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and on the sea, and all things that are in them, heard I saying, Unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb, be the blessing, and the honor, and the glory, and the dominion, for ever and ever.—*Revelation*, V, 12, 13.

The answer to our question is, that in order to emphasize the details (each one of which is a whole in itself, or of so great importance that it must be drawn to the reader's attention) each is set off by commas.

And in the second passage particularly what weight and importance are given to the details by the simple device of *violating a rule!* The comma then becomes a mark of emphasis to those who know the rule, and who, knowing, are struck with the unusual and unexpected commas.

There is nowhere more disagreement among writers than in the use of a comma before the last "and" where three or more words occur in the same construction, connected by "and." Some write:

The lecture was beautifully, elegantly, and forcibly delivered.

Others omit the comma before "and"; but the best usage favors the former method and with good reason; for the eye not being arrested by the comma is likely to run the two groups together, with the result that the attention is distributed over the two ideas instead of being concentrated on one at a time. But in some authors we cannot tell what a passage means, because they do not use the comma in the way we are considering. Hence, the absence of a comma in such illustrations as follow is likely seriously to mislead. For instance, how many mines are spoken of in the first sentence? how many reigns in the second?

They control the following mines: the Central, and Copper Falls, and Mohawk, and Calumet and Hecla.

It was part of the law of the land during the reign of Elizabeth, and James I, and Charles I, and William and Mary.

Now "Calumet and Hecla" is the name of one mine, as "William and Mary" designates one reign. If, however, I am not certain how an author uses commas in such constructions, I have no means of knowing whether Calumet and Hecla are two mines or one. In fact, I should, unless I had definite knowledge to the contrary, imagine they were two. So also with the reign of "William and Mary."

Since, however, there is no uniformity among authors in the use of commas in this connection, the student is advised to guard against running groups together just because there happens to be no comma separating them; and on the other hand, and this is

very important, when a careful author omits commas between groups connected by "and" there is always a reason for it and that reason generally is that he wants the absence of the comma to suggest that all the groups go to form one idea. Bear in mind then in reading aloud, that the comma does not in itself indicate a pause, nor does the absence of the comma indicate there is no pause. Each case must be decided by itself. The following passages may sharpen your wits and help you to a finer discrimination in this problem:

He could write, and cipher too.

In such a case he is entitled to take all the crops, and wood for fuel.

Interest and ambition, honor and shame, gratitude and revenge, are the prime movers in public transactions.

But whether clever or dull, learned or ignorant, clownish or polite, every man has as good a right to liberty as to life.

From generation to generation, man, and beast, and house, and land have gone on in succession here, replacing, following, renewing, repairing and being repaired, demanding and getting more support.

Come, pensive nun, devout and pure,  
Sober, steadfast, and demure.

Deaf to King Robert's threats and cries and prayers,  
They thrust him from the hall and down the stairs.

—LONGFELLOW: *Robert of Sicily*.

The foes of Rohab thrust the tongue in cheek,  
 Smiled in their beards, and muttered each to each;  
 Fleet messengers went riding north and south  
 And east and west among the tribes.

—BATES: *The Sorrow of Rohab.*

We have a voice, with which to pay the debt  
 Of boundless love and reverence and regret.

—TENNYSON: *Ode on the Death  
 of the Duke of Wellington.*

And let the land whose hearths he saved from shame  
 For many and many an age proclaim  
 At civic revel and pomp and game, etc.

—*Ibid.*

No sail from day to day, but every day  
 The sunrise broken into scarlet shafts  
 Among the palms and ferns and precipices.

—TENNYSON: *Enoch Arden.*

In each of the last four passages there is a unity produced by omitting the commas before the “ands,” that would be destroyed by breaking the sentences into small groups. The vocal expression in the last lines of each selection clearly indicates how you interpret the absence of the commas.

Frequently a comma takes the place of a verb or of a verb accompanied by other words. To understand this is to be able to interpret such sentences as these:

Truth leads a man in the ways of honor; deception, in the ways of evil.

The criminal dreads the magistrate; the rich man, the thief.

A wise man seeks to shine in himself; a fool, in others.

He rides on a flaming car, and grasps in his left hand a quiver full of arrows; in his right, a fiery bow.

Some mute, inglorious Milton here may rest,  
Some Cromwell, guiltless of his country's blood.

“Adjective clauses and contracted adjective clauses used parenthetically or coördinately are marked off by commas.” This is a rule of utmost importance to readers, and one frequently overlooked.

The constitution of Brazil, which is based on that of the United States of America, is the only South American constitution which has not been amended.

Here we have a coördinate clause, “Which is based,” etc., and a restrictive clause, “Which has not,” etc. Now how can we distinguish the two kinds of clauses? The first can be turned into a complete independent statement equivalent to “and it is based,” etc.; but we cannot do that with the second clause, because it is necessary to the completion of the sense: it is in reality an adjective equivalent to “a-which-has-not-been-amended.” Another way to regard the sentence is, “The constitution of Brazil (and I want to inform you it is based on that of the United States) is the only unamended South American constitution.” The first clause could be omitted entirely and leave a complete sentence; if, however, we omit the second clause, the sentence would be meaningless.

Another sentence further illustrates the principle under discussion:

The schools in Chicago which are badly built, ought to be torn down.

The schools in Chicago, which are badly built, ought to be torn down.

Quite a difference! What is it? And when you have answered that question, read both sentences aloud and note the difference in the two readings.

Explain the difference made by the comma in each of the following pairs of sentences:

The ships bound for America were poorly manned.

The ships, bound for America, were poorly manned.

The employees, discharged for smoking, will not be re-engaged.

The employees discharged for smoking will not be re-engaged.

The slaves, who were on deck, came from Africa.

The slaves who were on deck came from Africa.

The children, playing their innocent games, were arrested.

The children playing their innocent games were arrested.

Shylock, in *The Merchant of Venice*, is speaking to Bassanio of Antonio's wealth:

Yet his means are in supposition: he hath an argosy bound to Tripolis, another to the Indies; I understand, moreover, upon the Rialto, he hath a third at Mexico, a fourth for England, and other ventures he hath, squandered abroad.

This is the punctuation of the *Globe* edition, but some other editions print:

and other ventures he hath squandered abroad.

Both pointings make good sense, but I greatly prefer that of the *Globe* edition. Do you agree, or differ? Why? Here is material for an interesting class discussion, and I think you will learn from it that the comma or the absence of it means more than just a question of punctuation; it is a matter of Shylock's character.

In closing this discussion I cannot do better than quote the following passage from De Quincey, cited by Prof. Corson in his *Introduction to the Study of Milton*. In America, particularly, there is a marked tendency to reduce the use of punctuation marks to the lowest minimum; and the tendency is a wise one. But there is a danger of going too far, as some of the examples cited suggest. How effectively an artist may use commas Landor teaches us. De Quincey is speaking of Milton and Landor, and commenting on one of the striking passages in Milton's drama, *Samson Agonistes*. Samson, you remember, is expected to free the Children of Israel from the yoke of the Philistines; he is the "great deliverer"; but in a moment of weakness he tells the secret of his enormous strength—his long hair—to Delilah, who in his sleep shears his locks and then betrays him into the hands of his enemies, who put out his eyes, take him to Gaza, their capital city, and set him to work as a common slave. Now observe what De Quincey writes:

“Mr. Landor makes one correction by a simple improvement in the punctuation, which has a very fine effect. . . . Samson says, . . .

Ask for this great deliverer now, and find him  
*Eyeless in Gaza at the mill with slaves.*

Thus it is usually printed, that is, without a comma in the latter line; ‘but,’ says Landor, ‘there ought to be commas after *eyeless*, after *Gaza*, after *mill*.’ And why? because thus, ‘the grief of Samson is aggravated at every member of the sentence.’”

Ask for this great deliverer now, and find him  
*Eyeless, in Gaza, at the mill, with slaves.*

What an illumination! And how the voice with its marked falling inflection on “*eyeless*,” and “*Gaza*,” and “*mill*,” sounds like the slowly tolled knell of all the hopes of “this great deliverer.”

#### INTERPRETATION OF THE SEMICOLON

Since we are not studying the rules for the use of the semicolon in order to apply them, but rather to help us interpret them as we find them in literature, our task is not very difficult. It is well to know however that, simple as it is to understand the rules, there are many passages that need to be carefully studied.

In certain compound sentences commas would not be sufficiently significant, and there the semicolon is used.

The entrance of the word giveth light; it giveth understanding to the simple.

Friends may desert him; enemies may thong his way; disaster may threaten him; bodily weakness may assail him; but still with heroic courage he keeps on his way.

He was courteous, not cringing, to superiors; affable, not familiar, to equals; and kind, but not condescending or supercilious, to inferiors.

The point to be noted in all these passages (which are not hard to understand) is, that the semicolon helps us to follow the text, which, on the one hand, would be confused if only commas were used; and on the other, would have a rather different meaning if periods were substituted. The semicolons act, as it were, like braces to keep certain large parts of the text together. For example:

An hour passed on; the Turk awoke;  
That bright dream was his last;  
He woke to hear his sentries shriek,  
"To arms! They come—the Greek! the Greek!"

The student is not to conclude from what I have said that authors always make this brace effect by means of semicolons. For instance, one may see such passages as, "If I succeed in the venture, if I reach the goal of my ambition, I will never forget you." But at least we may be certain that when the semicolon is used it generally indicates the kind of bracing I referred to.

Again, it is used to mark off particulars under such circumstances as we find in the next sentences. But note carefully that the last particular is followed by a comma when it precedes the main statement, as in the first example.

If we think of glory in the field; of wisdom in the cabinet; of the purest patriotism; of morals without a stain, the august figure of Washington presents itself as the personation of all these ideas.

That Mr. Thackeray was born in India, in 1811; that he was educated at the Charter House and Cambridge; that he devoted himself, at first, to art, all this has, within a short time, been told again and again.

If I must make my defence before this body; if my life must be reviewed in your hearing; if my liberty and my life depend upon your verdict; then I must insist that you shall hear me patiently, and to the end.

He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his assent to their acts of pretended legislation: for quartering large bodies of armed troops among us; for protecting them, by a mock trial, from punishment for any murders which they should commit on the inhabitants of these States; for cutting off our trade with all parts of the world; for imposing taxes on us without our consent; for depriving us, in many cases, of the benefits of trial by jury; for transporting us beyond seas to be tried for pretended offences; for abolishing the free system of English laws in a neighboring province, establishing therein an arbitrary government, and enlarging its boundaries, so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these Colonies; for taking away our charters, abolishing our most valuable laws, and altering fundamentally the forms of our governments; for suspending our own legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.—*Declaration of Independence.*

In the final illustration are you not helped to analyze the thoughts, to see the various clauses in their true

relation to the main idea, by the semicolons? And you can further see how a recognition of the force of the semicolons affects the voice, particularly in such sentences as those that precede.

The semicolon braces certain groups, but at the same time denotes that the series of braced groups unite to form the one dominant idea of the whole sentence.

There is sweet music here that softer falls  
Than petals from blown roses on the grass,  
Or night-dews on still waters between walls  
Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass;  
Music that gentlier on the spirit lies,  
Than tir'd eyelids upon tir'd eyes;  
Music that brings sweet sleep down from the  
blissful skies.

—TENNYSON: *The Lotus Eaters.*

You must wake and call me early, call me early, mother dear;

To-morrow 'ill be the happiest time of all the glad New-year;

Of all the glad New-year, mother, the maddest merriest day;

For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

—TENNYSON: *The May Queen.*

No finer illustration can be found of the discriminating use of semicolons than in the next passage, from Arnold's *Sohrab and Rustum*. Students who could make nothing of the passage, and who therefore failed utterly in trying to read it aloud, have improved their interpretation instantly when they came to see the force of the semicolons.

As when some hunter in the spring hath found  
 A breeding eagle sitting on her nest,  
 Upon the craggy isle of a hill lake,  
 And pierc'd her with an arrow as she rose,  
 And follow'd her to find where she fell  
 Far off;—anon her mate comes winging back  
 From hunting, and a great way off descries  
 His huddling young left sole; at that, he checks  
 His pinion, and with short uneasy sweeps  
 Circles above his eyry, with loud screams  
 Chiding his mate back to her nest; but she  
 Lies dying, with the arrow in her side,  
 In some far stony gorge out of his ken,  
 A heap of fluttering feathers—never more  
 Shall the lake glass her, flying over it;  
 Never the black and dripping precipices  
 Echo her stormy scream as she sails by—  
 As that poor bird flies home, nor knows his loss,  
 So Rustum knew not his own loss, but stood  
 Over his dying son, and knew him not.

—ARNOLD: *Sohrab and Rustum.*

#### INTERPRETATION OF THE COLON

It is not hard, as a rule, to interpret the colon, but there are times when carelessness will lead to serious misinterpretation. In the *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington*, Tennyson is describing the funeral procession of the dead duke:

Lead out the pageant: sad and slow,  
 As fits an universal woe,  
 Let the long lone procession go.

Reading hurriedly, a student will pay no attention to the colon and read the line:

Lead out the pageant sad and slow;

and it is not until he reads further that he finds that the second line is parenthetical, and that “sad and slow,” instead of modifying “lead,” really modifies “let go.” Or, to express it another way: the phrase “sad and slow” is separated on the one hand from “Lead out the pageant” by a colon, and by a comma from the next statement. A moment’s reflection, then, shows us that “sad and slow” is more closely joined with what *follows* than with what *precedes* it. The thought closes with “pageant” (the colon saying, so to speak, “in the following manner”) and begins again with “sad and slow,” continuing with the rest of the description of the pageant.

Tennyson has another very effective use of the colon, and just where the reader may overlook it:

Nor rested thus content, but day by day,  
Leaving her household and good father, climb'd  
That eastern tower, and entering barr'd her door,  
Stript off the case, and read the naked shield.  
Now guess'd a hidden meaning in his arms,  
Now made a pretty history to herself  
Of every dint a sword had beaten in it,  
And every scratch a lance had made upon it,  
Conjecturing when and where: this cut is fresh;  
That ten years back; this dealt him at Caerlyle;  
That at Caerleon; this at Camelot:  
And ah God's mercy, what a stroke was there!  
And here a thrust that might have killed, but God  
Broke the strong lance, and roll'd his enemy down.  
And saved him: so she lived in fantasy.

—TENNYSON: *Lancelot and Elaine*.

Lancelot, the greatest warrior in King Arthur's court, has come to Astolat on the way to the tournament. Here he meets the Lord of Astolat and his beautiful young daughter Elaine, who falls in love with him. On leaving the castle he takes a shield that is loaned to him by the Lord of Astolat, leaving his own behind with Elaine. His shield has many designs wrought all over it and many dents and marks upon it where it has been struck by spears and swords in the great battles and tournaments fought by King Arthur and his knights: fought at Camelot, Caerleon, and other parts of Arthur's realm.

Elaine who is a very expert needle-woman makes a "case," or cover, for the shield and embroiders it in designs and colors exactly like those on the shield itself, which she kept in a room of the eastern tower.

As you read the passage the first time you note that Elaine is guessing where the different "cuts" on the shield were "beaten" into it. Now read it a second time, noting carefully and counting each cut, and then answer the question: How many cuts were there? What difference does the conclusion you reach regarding the number of cuts make in your vocal expression? How does the colon affect your interpretation?

We have seen that commas set off certain kinds of small groups and thus help us to get the thought. Then we learned that semicolons performed a similar function with large groups. Now we shall see that colons have, as one of their uses, a similar function. The principle on which this usage is based no doubt is the need to convey to the reader that from the

beginning to the end of the long sentence there is really but one theme. Here are some unusually good illustrations:

All is over and done:  
Render thanks to the Giver,  
England, for thy son.  
Let the bell be toll'd.  
Render thanks to the Giver,  
And render him to the mould.  
Under the cross of gold  
That shines over city and river,  
There he shall rest forever  
Among the wise and the bold.  
Let the bell be toll'd:  
And a reverent people behold  
The towering car, the sable steeds:  
Bright let it be with his blazon'd deeds,  
Dark in its funeral fold.  
Let the bell be toll'd:  
And a deeper knell in the heart be knoll'd;  
And the sound of the sorrowing anthem roll'd  
Thro' the dome of the golden cross;  
And the volleying cannon thunder his loss;  
He knew their voices of old,  
For many a time in many a clime  
His captain's ear has heard them boom,  
Bellowing victory, bellowing doom:  
When he with those deep voices wrought,  
Guarding realms and kings from shame;  
With those deep voices our dead captain taught  
The tyrant, and asserts his claim  
In that dread sound to the great name,  
Which he has worn so pure of blame.  
In praise and in dispraise the same,  
A man of well-attemper'd frame.

O civic muse, to such a name,  
 To such a name for ages long,  
 To such a name,  
 Preserve a broad approach of fame,  
 And ever-echoing avenues of song.

—TENNYSON: *Ode on the Death  
 of the Duke of Wellington.*

We perceive that the dial shadow has moved, but we did not see it moving; we see that the grass has grown, but we did not see it growing: so our advances in knowledge consist of such minute steps that they are perceivable only by the distance.

He sunk to repose where the red heaths are blended;  
 One dream of his childhood his fancy passed o'er:  
 But his battles are fought, and his march it is ended;  
 The sound of the bagpipes shall wake him no more.

A man can scarce allege his own merits with modesty, much less extol them; a man cannot sometimes brook to supplicate or beg, and a number of the like: but all these things are graceful in a friend's mouth, which are blushing in a man's own.

A much more frequent use of the colon is in denoting enumeration:

Many countries have a national flower: France the lily, England the rose, Scotland the thistle, etc.

But for those who interpret literature (rather than for those who write it), the most important aspect to understand—and here students all too frequently fail utterly—is that the colon is very often used to separate a clause which is grammatically complete from a second clause which illustrates its meaning, or amplifies it, as by way of inference or conclusion.

Avoid affectation: it is a contemptible weakness.

It is dreadful to live in suspense: it is the life of a spider.

Nor was the religion of the Greek drama a mere form: it was full of truth, spirit, and power.

There is no mortal truly wise and restless at the same time: wisdom is the repose of the mind.

The present life is not wholly prosaic, precise, tame, and finite: to the gifted eye, it abounds in the poetic.

New ribbons, however make little difference on the whole: those who liked the cheap play before will like her none the worse for the change.

On the other hand, nobody had ever heard of a Dodson who had ruined himself: it was not the way of that family.

There was once a little lilac bush that grew by a child's window. It had been a very busy lilac bush all its life: drinking moisture from the earth and making it into sap; adding each year a tiny bit of wood to its slender trunk; filling out its leaf buds; making its leaves larger and larger; and then—oh, happy, happy time! hanging purple flowers here and there among its branches.

It is not expected that, from these studies and illustrations, you will become expert in the use of punctuation points: but it is hoped that you will be stimulated to greater care in their interpretation, since we have learned that authors use them not because the rules of rhetoric demand it, but to make it easier for readers to understand. And, most of all, we have learned that to recognize the force of a single mark of punctuation means often the difference between true and false vocal interpretation.

## CHAPTER XII

### PUNCTUATION—*Continued*

#### INTERPRETATION OF THE EXCLAMATION POINT

The interpreting of the exclamation point is not always easy, and is, moreover, frequently slighted. Its commonest use is in connection with interjections and exclamatory sentences:

Oh! Alas! Bah!

How beautiful she is!

What a piece of work is man!

This is apparently all very simple, but is it really so? Custom demands that interjections (except "O") be followed by exclamation marks, and no doubt the intention is to suggest emotion. But after a while we disregard this emotional suggestion altogether in spite of the fact that there may be much feeling behind the interjection. To repeat: we, *having become used to seeing the mark of exclamation in so many places where it does not indicate any depth of feeling*, come finally to ignore it altogether. We shall see much more of this aspect of punctuation when we come to study Emotion, but even at this stage the pupil can be guided by this emotional sign post.

But she is in her grave, and, oh,  
The difference to me!

—WORDSWORTH: *Lucy*.

Alas! Nothing can save him now!

Oh! my offence is rank, it smells to heaven.

Quiek! Begone! Out of my sight!

Heaven preserve us!

Would that better feelings moved them!

O Lord, be merciful unto me, a sinner!

Alas! all our hopes are blasted.

The mark of exclamation is used after expressions of wonder, surprise, fear, horror, and the like; after command, and the expression of a wish; and is particularly effective in suggesting contempt and sarcasm.

They did not fight, tens against thousands; they did not fight for wives and children, but for lands and plunder: therefore they are heroes!

He has been laboring to prove that Shakespeare's plays were written by Bacon!

Though all are thus satisfied with the dispensations of Nature, how few listen to her voice! how few follow her as a guide!

What a mighty work he has brought to a successful end, with what perseverance, what energy, with what fruitfulness of resource!

Alas, noble spirit, that this should be thy lot!

Oh that your minds were interested in this subjeet!

Welcome, noble defenders of your country!

Venerable men! you have come down to us from a former generation.

Father Almighty! hear our prayer.

Hurrah! the day is ours!

He asserted that the earth is square, because if round no one could stand up (!) on the opposite side.

This college graduate (!) could do no better than to spell "commendable" with one "m."

"A mark of exclamation, and not a point of interrogation, is placed after what are called rhetorical questions, or statements made more striking by being put in the form of questions. They are not asked for the sake of receiving a direct answer, and are in reality exclamations. Still all rhetorical questions are not thus punctuated; the point of interrogation is sometimes more effective." So say the rhetoricians; but it is well not to attempt to set down any definite rule in this regard. I have found much help when in doubt concerning the interpretation by asking myself whether a certain sentence interrogative in construction and highly emotional is assertive or interrogative. For instance, when the great prophet asks,

Shall not the Judge of all the Earth do right?

I know, first, he is not asking for information. Then I must decide which of two motives he had in mind. Did he mean "Is it possible *anyone* could doubt the Righteousness of the Judge?" Or, to put it another

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way: "The Judge of all the Earth cannot fail to do right." But he may have meant "Is it possible that anyone in all the world could have the slightest doubt but that the Judge of all the Earth shall do right?" I think the latter is the correct interpretation, for it signifies to me that the speaker is so certain of his judgment that it never occurs to him (it makes no difference whether he is conscious or not of his reasoning) to assert dogmatically his profound conviction.

When Tennyson writes, in describing the glorious fight that the English ship "The Revenge" made against fifty-three Spanish vessels:

God of battles, was ever a battle like this in the world before?

he is essentially saying "God of battles, there *never* was battle like this in the world before!" Do you see the difference between this Motive and that in the other illustration?

Macaulay writes:

Discipline of mind! say rather starvation, confinement, torture, annihilation.

Let us guess at the context. Let us suppose that someone has claimed that a certain study is a discipline of mind. Now, does the author mean to reply with the contemptuous assertion:

Such stuff you call mind discipline! I call it starvation, etc.

But might it not be:

Are you crazy or ignorant enough to call that stuff discipline?

Iago (in *Othello*) tells Roderigo that Desdemona, Othello's wife, is in love with Cassio. Then cries Roderigo:

With him! It is not possible.

Here it is the astonishment overwhelming the speaker that gives to his exclamation the melody of a question, as if to say, Do you possibly mean she can love such a man as that? Without the exclamation point one might, for a moment at least, believe it was a simple desire for information that motivated Roderigo's melody. As it is, there can be no doubt.

*Julius Caesar* affords another test of our judgment. Titinius and Cassius are much beloved by Brutus. Cassius, defeated, has killed himself, and Titinius, coming upon the body of his friend, places a wreath upon his brow and falls on his own sword. As the two lie there in death Brutus enters and, seeing them, turns to Cato, saying:

Are yet two Romans living such as these?  
The last of all the Romans, fare thee well!

Two interpretations are possible. I care not which you make *provided you can defend it*. One expresses a motive like that we discussed in *The Revenge*, which can be paraphrased thus:

No one could conceive any other two Romans living such as these!

And the other might mean :

Am I not right, my dear friend Cato, in saying there are no two Romans living such as these?

It is Gratiano who asks :

who riseth from a feast  
With that keen appetite that he sits down?  
Where is the horse that doth untread again  
His tedious measures with the unbated fire  
That he did pace them first?

He expects no answer ; but if one come it surely will be "no one." His state of mind is assertive.

So it all depends on interpretation, and it makes no great difference what interpretation one chooses provided it is not guess work ; provided it has logic and common sense behind it.

In almost all of the preceding illustrations, the emotion was so forcefully expressed through the language that you might have recognized it even without a special mark of punctuation. In other words, it is used merely to make *certain* that the reader does not miss the feeling.

The mark is often placed after groups that in themselves do not appear to be particularly important. In fact, authors frequently express an important thought in language so simple that it apparently has no great weight at all, and then end the sentence with an exclamation point to signify the importance of the thought, or to stimulate curiosity in a statement that seems to be of slight value, or to indicate emotion far beyond the power of mere words to convey.

A woman fearing that her lover may be assassinated if he should attack certain villains who want to rob him has a plan to save him, but knows she cannot carry it out unless she can prevent him from knowing it. The author says:

She did not want to arouse his wonder, which would lead him straight to suspicion. He must not suspect!—  
CONRAD: *Victory*.

Here is a similar example. Wordsworth's *Michael* begins with a description of a lonely spot in the mountains, and continues:

Nor should I have made mention of this dell  
But for one object which you might pass by,  
Might see and notice not. Beside the brook  
There is a straggling heap of unhewn stones!  
And to that place a story appertains,  
Which, though it be ungarnish'd with events,  
Is not unfit, I deem, for the fireside,  
Or for the summer shade.

There is no evidence of strong emotion in the sentence preceded by the exclamation point, and a careless reader might overlook it entirely. Yes, even an observant reader would have to be particularly alert not to "see and notice not" this most unusual sign at the close of a sentence so simple. Furthermore, there is nothing in the lines before nor immediately after to suggest in the slightest way what we do not see until the poem is well advanced; but when we get to the critical point of the story we learn that all the pathos of this great poem gathers about that heap of stones. The exclamation point is, then, a mark of emphasis,

intended to center your attention upon that pile of stones, and perhaps arouse your curiosity concerning it. A reader who grasps the full significance of that exclamation point will not fail to express it in his voice.

A rather rare use of the exclamation point is illustrated by these two sentences:

He a patriot!! Then how we should admire Benedict Arnold!!

That man virtuous!! You might as well preach to me of the virtue of Judas Iscariot!!

And occasionally we find passages like this:

To save him I would give all my wealth! all my hopes of the future!! Nay, my very life!!!

Help! Help!! Help!!!

An author in this way conveys the growing intensity of the emotion, and leaves us no choice but to manifest that climax in our vocal interpretation. Of course, you must use your judgment as to the degree and quality of the emotion; but if you are on the alert for exclamation marks, you will often get a meaning from the text you otherwise might not see, and furthermore, having got it, you will put a meaning into your vocal expression that will give your listener an insight into the lines he would not otherwise get. The exclamation point doesn't tell you the kind of emotion nor the degree, but it arrests the attention, and your imagination must do the rest.

Study the following passages and then express through the voice the feeling or mood suggested to you by the exclamation mark:

Would that I had perished!

Hark! hark! the Dauphin's drum, a warning bell!

O God! that men should put an enemy in their mouths, to steal away their brains!—*Othello*.

Oh, how I suffer!

Ho, trumpets, sound a war note!

Ho, lictors, clear the way!

How discriminating was the speaker on that occasion! how earnest! how eloquent! how profound!

Hail, candle-light! without disparagement to sun or moon, the kindest luminary of the three!—*Lamb*.

Oh for that ancient spirit

Which curbed the Senate's will!—*Macaulay*.

O that I had wings like a dove!

O that this too, too solid flesh would melt, thaw, and resolve itself into a dew!—*Hamlet*.

He paid him the delicate (!) compliment of calling him the most artistic liar he had ever listened to.

Rouse, ye Romans! rouse, ye slaves!

Great Glamis! worthy Cawdor! Greater than both by the all-hail hereafter!—*Macbeth*.

My valor is certainly going! it is sneaking off! I feel it oozing out, as it were, at the palms of my hands.

How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is  
To have a thankless child!

—King Lear.

Long live the King!

Heaven forbid!

His subject was "The Wasness of the Isness"!

And the "professor," who was advertising to teach "Oratory" by mail in twenty lessons, went on to say: "Nobody should leave this building without making up their (!) mind to take this course."

Sink me the ship, Master Gunner—sink her, split her  
in twain!

Fall into the hands of God, not into the hands of Spain!

—TENNYSON: *The Revenge.*

*Brutus.* O Julius Caesar, thou art mighty yet!

Thy spirit walks abroad, and turns our swords  
In our own proper entrails.

Cato.

Brave Titinius!

Look, whether he have not crown'd dead Cassius!

—*Julius Caesar*, V, iv.

*King Richard.* A horse! a horse! my kingdom for a horse!

*Catesby.* Withdraw, my lord; I'll help you to a horse.

*King Richard.* Slave, I have set my life upon a cast,

And I will stand the hazard of the die:

I think there be six Richmonds in the field;

Five have I slain to-day instead of him.

A horse! a horse! my kingdom for a horse!

—King Richard III, V. iv.

Turn back again to *The Sea*, under Grouping, and observe how much the exclamation mark suggests.

Particularly in the first line of the third stanza how it helps us to appreciate the love, the joy of the sailor! "I love," he says, and then as if that were not enough, he adds "Oh! how I love to ride," etc. But by the time most readers come towards the end of the stanza, they are likely to forget the enthusiasm with which it opened. Suddenly they note the author's exclamation point, which is his way of telling us that the emotion runs through the whole stanza. Then let them go back and read the poem from the beginning, bearing in mind the purpose of that final exclamation point, and it is more than likely their voices will convey to others the joy out of which the poem sprang.

#### INTERPRETATION OF THE INTERROGATION POINT

If there is one punctuation mark we feel sure of interpreting it is the question mark. But *are* we certain? Does the question mark always mean that the speaker asks for information? Recall under Motive the question, "Are you going out?" and how, annoyed at receiving no answer, the speaker asserts his authority with an emphatic repetition of the words in the tone of command. Grammatically this is a question, but, as we learned when we studied Motive, it is not the grammar but the purpose which determines the vocal expression. Hence, in the sentence we are discussing, your melody will not be one that asks for information, but which demands an answer. Writers recognize this principle and often argue that the interrogation point in such a sentence as the last illustration is really misleading, for if it is used without following it with

some such explanation as "said I, in a sharp peremptory tone," or "said I, in a tone demanding an answer," the reader would really be in doubt as to the meaning. When we take up the study of exclamation points we shall see how it is sometimes possible to indicate when a group having the structure of a question is really not a question. But since there is no common agreement among writers and publishers on this subject it is necessary to be on one's guard against taking for granted that every sentence ending with a mark of interrogation asks for information. Here are several examples:

*Bassanio.* In law, what plea so tainted and corrupt  
But, being season'd with a gracious voice,  
Obscures the show of evil? In religion,  
What damned error, but some sober brow  
Will bless it and approve it with a text,  
Hiding the grossness with fair ornament?

—*The Merchant of Venice*, III, ii.

*Cassius.* When went there by an age, since the great  
flood,  
But it was famed with more than one man?  
When could they say till now, that talk'd of Rome,  
That her wide walls encompass'd but one man?

—*Julius Caesar*, I, ii.

*Gloucester.* Was ever woman in this humor woo'd?  
Was ever woman in this humor won?

—*Richard III*, I, ii.

These sentences really assert while retaining the form of a question: and as literature, as appeals to the imagination, are the assertions not more effective be-

cause of their interrogative form? The student's attention is called to this fact not so much because he is likely to be in doubt concerning the Motive of such sentences as we have been discussing as to put him on his guard against that dangerous rule to "raise your voice at a question that can be answered by yes or no." You see, it all depends on whether such sentences really are questions. When he decides that, he need not worry about the inflection: it will take care of itself.

In many cases an author tells us that his interrogative sentence is really an assertion by closing with an exclamation point instead of a question mark. As:

How could he have been so foolish!

Later on we shall see more of such illustrations; but suppose an author does not, through oversight or carelessness or ignorance, use the exclamation point. There is nothing for the reader to do but interpret the sentence in the light of the context, bearing always in mind that merely because a sentence ends with a question mark it does not follow that it is, strictly considered, a question.

One other use of the question mark is worth a moment's consideration:

While you are revelling in the delights (?) of the London season, I am leading a hermit life, with no companions save my books.

How that mark affects the meaning and your vocal expression! Here, by a simple device the writer sug-

gests more by one punctuation mark than could be said in a dozen words of description. And yet some students read aloud that sentence with no more regard for the special use of the question mark than if it had not been there.

A not dissimilar use signifies that the writer may be in doubt:

He gave his name as Roger De Quincey, lineal descendant of the great Thomas De Quincey (?).

This use of the question mark is very modern and not frequently found, but where it is, it is highly significant, as you have seen.

#### INTERPRETATION OF DASHES, HYPHENS, AND QUOTATION MARKS

When I remember how we have worked together, and together borne misfortune; when I remember—but what avails it to remember?

And all this story was about—what do you think?

We cannot hope to succeed, unless—but we must succeed.

The significant mark of punctuation in the preceding passages is the dash. What does it indicate? If there were no dashes what would be necessary to make the meaning clear? One explanation will do for the three cases. After the word preceding the dash we should have to say, "At this point the speaker suddenly stopped for a moment, interrupting himself in the midst of his sentence, and then abruptly continued with," etc. In other words, these dashes mark an

abrupt break. The author doesn't tell us the cause of the break, but the dash arrests our attention, shocks us, as it were—or at least it should—into a consciousness that something unusual has happened in the course of the speaker's remarks. Just what happens must be determined by the student, who must bear in mind that that which causes the break will often affect very perceptibly the interpretation, silent and vocal, of what follows the dash. This is very important to remember. The dash stimulates the reader so that he is on the alert for some change, and unless he notices it his reading will be seriously marred.

Now read aloud the three sentences we have been discussing and note the complete change in your delivery of the words after the dash, compared with your reading of those that precede it.

Sometimes we use the dash merely to give a stronger emphasis than would be suggested by the usual mark of punctuation. You do not need to know the context in the next illustration to understand that the person who reported the speech from which the excerpt is taken wanted to indicate something in the speaker's delivery that commas would not have indicated, or at least would not have indicated so certainly or so immediately.

Now where is the revenue which is to do all these mighty things? Five-sixths repealed—abandoned—sunk—gone—lost forever.

Here you see at once the force of the assertiveness, the positiveness of the speaker, and these qualities

manifest themselves in our voices as we appreciate the meaning of the dashes and enter into the spirit of the speaker.

Note a very similar effect in the next extract:

He entereth smiling and—embarrassed. He holdeth out his hand for you to shake, and—draweth it back again. He easually looketh in about dinner time—when the table is full. He offereth to go away, seeing you have company—but is induced to stay.

Here the dash does not signify a break in the grammatical structure or in the sequence, but a very decided change of mood. How much humor would be lost if one were to read this paragraph ignoring the dashes!

Sometimes the dash denotes a very long pause.

To be or not to be—that is the question.

We find it used in dramatic literature to suggest effort, struggle, pain.

I can't—say—oh! how I suffer!—just—what—did happen.

Since breaks in the continuity may result from many causes it seems better for the student to study and read aloud a large number of excerpts illustrating various uses of the dash rather than to try to master a great many rules.

Do we—*can we*—send out educated boys and girls from the high school at eighteen?

This may be said to be—but, never mind, we will pass over that.

Then there came a time—let us say, for convenience, with Germany and France—when this method of training children had to be stopped.

If it be asked—and in saying this I put into one phrase my whole theory—why education is so far behind the times, etc.

Here we are face to face with a difficult problem—difficult because it is a new one.

These discoveries—gunpowder, printing-press, compass, and telescope—were the weapons before which the old science trembled.

Amos, with the idea that Jehovah is an upright judge . . .; Hosea, whose Master hated injustice and falsehood . . .; Isaiah, whose Lord would have mercy only on those who relieved the widow and the fatherless—these were the spokesmen.

This—I say it with regret—was not done.

I whipt him for robbing an orchard once when he was  
but a child—

“The farmer dared me to do it,” he said; he was always  
so wild—

And idle—and couldn’t be idle—my Willy—he never  
could rest.

—TENNYSON.

O it is difficult—life is very difficult! It seems right to me sometimes that we should follow our strongest feeling;—but then, such feelings continually come across the ties that all our former life has made for us—the ties that have made others dependent on us—and would cut them in two.—ELIOT.

We shall march prospering,—not thro' his presence;  
Songs may inspirit us,—not from his lyre;  
Deeds will be done,—while he boasts his quiescence,  
Still bidding crouch whom the rest bade aspire.

—BROWNING: *The Lost Leader.*

Protestant visitors being then rare in Auvergne, and still more, reverent and gentle ones, she gave her pretty curiosity free sway; and enquired earnestly of us, what sort of creatures we were,—how far we believed in God, or tried to be good, or hoped to get to heaven?—RUSKIN.

Let no sad tears be shed, when I die, over me,  
But bury me deep in the sea,—in the sea.

You speak like a boy,—like a boy, who thinks the old, gnarled oak can be twisted as easily as the young sapling.

Nicholas Copernicus was instructed in that seminary, where it is always happy when one can be well taught,—the family circle.

In 1813, Moore entered upon his noble, poetical, and patriotic task,—writing lyrics for the ancient music of his country.

Kings and their subjects, masters and their slaves, find a common level in two places,—at the foot of the cross, and in the grave.

He had no malice in his mind—no ruffles on his shirt.

Some men are full of affection—affection for themselves.

Men will wrangle for religion, write for it, fight for it, anything but—live for it.

If you will give me your attention, I will show you—but stop! I do not know that you wish to see.

Thou dost not mean—  
 No, no: thou wouldest not have me make  
 A trial of my skill upon my child!

She fell down stairs and broke her neck—lace!

“I forgot my—” “Your portmanteau?” hastily interrupted Thomas. “The same.”

Then they rode back, but not—  
 Not the Six Hundred.

Wherefore awake them into life again?  
 Let them sleep on untroubled—it is best.

To pull down the false and to build up the true, and to uphold what there is of true in the old,—let this be our endeavor.

The collision of mind with mind; the tug and strain of intellectual wrestling; the tension of every mental fibre, as the student reaches forth to take hold of the topmost pinnacle of thought,—these make men.

“Sir Smug,” he cries (for lowest at the board,—  
 Just made fifth chaplain of his patron lord,  
 His shoulders witnessing, by many a shrug,  
 How much his feelings suffered—sat Sir Smug),  
 “Your office is to winnow false from true:  
 Come, prophet, drink; and tell us what think you.”

And the ear—that gathers into its hidden chambers all music and gladness—would you give it for a kingdom?

The noble indignation with which Emmett repelled the charge of treason against his country; the eloquent vindication of his name; his pathetic appeal to posterity, in the hopeless hour of condemnation,—all these entered

deeply into every generous bosom, and even his enemies lamented the stern policy which dictated his execution.

There comes a creeping as of centipedes running down the spine,—then a gasp and a great jump of the heart,—then a sudden flush and a beating in the vessels of the head,—then a long sigh, and the poem is written!

yet the wife—

When he was gone—the children—what to do?  
Then Enoch lay long-pondering on his plans;  
To sell the boat—and yet he loved her well—  
How many a rough sea had he weather'd in her!  
He knew her (as a horseman knows his horse)—  
And yet to sell her—then with what she brought  
Buy goods and stores—set Annie forth in trade  
With all that seamen needed or their wives—  
So might she keep the house while he was gone.  
Should he not trade himself out yonder? go  
This voyage more than once? yea twice or thrice—  
As oft as needed—last, returning rich,  
Become the master of a larger craft,  
With fuller profits lead an easier life,  
Have all his pretty young ones educated,  
And pass his days in peace among his own.

—TENNYSON: *Enoch Arden.*

Do you get any difference of idea between the following sentences?

The tray held tea, and bread, and butter.

The tray held tea, and bread-and-butter.

In order to bring out the difference in the pictures read aloud the two sentences.

Do we not understand—at any rate they do in

England—that bread and butter are two ideas, while bread-and-butter is but one? How could the difference better be expressed than by the hyphens?

The hyphen is often used to group words in order to express an idea for which there appears to be no one single word. As examples we have:

A give-and-take battle.

A never-to-be-forgotten meeting.

A newspaper used the hyphen in a recent article very effectively when it printed:

We need a law restricting the labor of mothers-of-young-children employed in factories.

This may be newspaper English, and the writer might have said “restricting the employment in factories of mothers of young children.” But that isn’t the question for us to decide: we must interpret first for ourselves and then vocally for others what we find on the page. Besides the sentence wouldn’t have been awkward if it hadn’t been that “children” is followed by “employed.”

A little gnat makes a buzzing sound. Keeping that fact in mind, study carefully the following passage from Tennyson:

The tiny-trumpeting gnat can break our dream  
When sweetest.

If there were no hyphen after “tiny” what would the meaning be? Read the passage as it stands, and then as if there were no hyphen.

Examine the marks of punctuation at the close of the following extract:

Do you remember who it was that wrote  
"Whatever England's fields display,  
The fairest scenes are thine, Torbay!"?

You observe at the close first an exclamation; then quotation marks; then a question mark. How do you interpret these? As you reread the sentence you see that the speaker is using the words of another beginning "Whatever." Then we note the exclamation after "Torbay." Now, what does that mean? From our study of the exclamation point we understand at once that here it is a sign of emotion, and since this appears within the quotation marks we conclude that the words quoted are emotional. That leaves the question mark to indicate that the person speaking is asking a question which includes the quotation. To show how much the vocal expression is affected even in such a simple illustration as the one we are discussing let us study it solely from this viewpoint. Disregard the quotation marks and the question. What remains is the original remark of admiration. Read it to express the author's feeling:

Whatever England's fields display,  
The fairest scenes are thine, Torbay!

But without any knowledge of the rest of the paragraph from which the three lines are chosen, it seems that the person asking for information is not at all moved by the emotion of the author. With only such evidence as we have at hand concerning the feeling of

the speaker, would it not appear a false interpretation to put *any* of the original feeling into the reading of the passage?

Suppose the sentence were:

Who wrote that abominable rubbish,  
"Whatever England's fields display,  
The fairest scenes are thine, Torbay!"!!

Here surely is a radically different meaning from that in the mind of the first speaker. Inexperienced readers often take for granted that all quotations within quotations are to be read as they would be in the text from which they are selected. Let me illustrate. A beggar whines, "Would you please help a poor starving man?" and I help him, and find out later he was an impostor. I am highly indignant and cry:

That miserable vagabond with his "would you please help a poor starving man?" ought to go to jail.

Cassius says to Brutus, speaking of Caesar:

Ay, and that tongue of his, that bade the Romans  
Mark him and write his speeches in their books,  
Alas, it cried, "Give me some drink, Titinius,"  
As a sick girl.

How did Caesar speak these words? Would Cassius, carried away by the contempt, anger, excitement of the moment, stop (consciously or not, it makes no difference) literally to reproduce the tone and manner of Caesar? Read it as you think it should be done.

In Eugene Field's *Little Boy Blue*, a father recalls the picture of his little boy, now dead, talking to his

toys, for what turned out to be the last time. The father then adds—observe the quotation marks:

“Now don’t you go till I come,” he said,  
“And don’t you make any noise.”  
So toddling off to his trundle-bed  
He dreamt of the pretty toys.

And I have heard elocutionists with so little sense of interpretation that they read the quoted words in literal imitation of the voice and manner of a young child!

The following excerpt presents a similar problem:

What is the use of asking the question, “What would he have done in different circumstances?”!

Here it is manifest that strong assertion is the dominant mood, and not the question. There is no asking for information but a distinct note of anger or annoyance.

“What must I do to be saved?” is a question in form, but its speech melody is that of assertion, equivalent to “Tell me what I must do to be saved.” Change this to the form of our illustration and we have a true question to be answered by yes or no:

Can you tell me in what chapter I can find “What must I do to be saved?”

In this case note that the question mark at the end serves both for the quotation and the entire sentence.

Read the following sentences aloud and bring out the meaning of each as indicated by the quotation marks:

Thereupon the mob bursts in and inquires, "What are you doing for the people?"

Thereupon the mob bursts in and inquires what are you doing for the people.

In the next passage we see at a glance "jargon" and "fustian" are the words of the person spoken of; but if "absurd" were not quoted there would be considerable doubt as to whether the present speaker agrees or not in calling these things "jargon" and "absurd."

He frequently calls them "absurd," and applies to them such epithets as "jargon," "fustian," and the like.

In the scene where Cassius is trying to induce Brutus to enter the conspiracy against Caesar he says:

Brutus and Caesar: what should be in that Caesar?  
Why should that name be sounded more than yours?  
Write them together, yours is as fair a name;  
Sound them, it doth become the mouth as well;  
Weigh them, it is as heavy; conjure with 'em,  
"Brutus" will start a spirit as soon as "Caesar."  
Now, in the names of all the gods at once,  
Upon what meat doth this our Caesar feed,  
That he is grown so great?

—*Julius Caesar*, I, ii.

If we were to print the names of Brutus and Caesar with quotation marks it would be clear at once that Cassius is referring to the names, not the persons, and the vocal expression would be subtly modified by the quotation marks. I think most editions of Shakespeare do not use the quotation marks, but I believe the meaning would be more surely grasped, certainly more quickly, if they were used.

Again, in the line:

“Brutus” will start a spirit as soon as “Caesar,”

it would seem to be absolutely necessary to print the names with quotation marks (as Rolfe does); for in this case it is surely not intended that the man Brutus will start a spirit as soon as Caesar; it is the power of the *name* “Brutus” that is contrasted with the name “Caesar.”

An example even more illuminating is the following from the play of *Ulysses*. Ulysses, the hero of the drama, passing through Hades in order to get news of his wife, is stopped by one of the ghosts who, in reply to Ulysses’ question, says, “She lives.” But when Ulysses asks whether she is still true to him, the ghost merely repeats “She lives” and disappears. Then Ulysses, in despair, cries out:

“Lives” and no more, is worse to me than “dead.”

This passage read carelessly is flat and almost without meaning, but the quoted words interpreted as they should be are full of passion and despair. Paraphrased the line would read, “To tell me that she lives and to say no more than that is worse than if you had spoken the word the very opposite of “lives”—the word, “dead.”

Sometimes one may quote a speaker who is quoting some other speaker, or a passage from literature. The following is an example. To express the meaning vocally is a nice problem for the reader.

"Let me quote from Rossetti's *Life of Keats*," he said. "Mr. Rossetti writes as follows:

"To one of these phrases a few words of comment may be given. That axiom which concludes the "Ode on a Grecian Urn"—

““Beauty is truth, truth beauty,—that is all

Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know,”

is perhaps the most important contribution to thought which the poetry of Keats contains: it pairs with and transcends

““A thing of beauty is a joy forever.””

"And now I shall conclude my first point," he continued, "by remarking that . . ."

(Be certain that you understand just why the writer of that passage used each one of the quotation marks. Then, reading aloud, make another understand as clearly as you do, yourself.)

## CHAPTER XIII

### REVIEW EXERCISES IN PUNCTUATION

Every selection in this chapter illustrates one or more phases of the problem of the interpretation of punctuation. They are rich in suggestion and will amply repay carefulst study. Every extract should be read aloud.

The importance of correctly interpreting the punctuation marks warrants us in studying a great many passages, but your interest is more likely to grow than to wane as you find in each illustration a vital, gripping problem that taxes your powers of logic and interpretation. For you see that the punctuation affects Grouping, Sequence, Motive, Central Idea—all the elements entering into the study of the printed page.

I tell thee now,—and I shall keep my word,—  
If e'er again I find thee railing on,  
As now thou dost, then let Ulysses wear  
His head no longer, let me not be called  
The father of Telemachus, if I  
Shall fail to seize thee, and to strip thee bare  
Of cloak and tunic, and whatever else  
Covers thy carcass, and to send thee forth,  
Howling, to air swift barks upon the shore,  
Scourged from the council with a storm of blows.

—*Iliad* (Bryant's translation).

(The first time you read this speech of Ulysses you are likely to interpret it as meaning that if ever again he hears the person railing he, Ulysses, will wear his head no longer. Study the commas carefully, and you will see that the entire speech beginning with the second line, points forward continually to the end.)

Why, don't you understand what war is?

(The above is the opening line of a poem recently published. Note what a difference in the vocal expression the absence of the comma would make.)

Death is here, and death is there,  
 Death is busy everywhere.  
 All around, within, beneath,  
 Above, is death; and we are death.

—SHELLEY.

*Cassio.* Dost thou hear, my honest friend?

*Clown.* No, I hear not your honest friend. I hear  
 you. —*Othello*, III, ii.

A woman will, or won't, depend on 't.

And more nearly, dying thus, resemble thee.

I have another engagement, in Detroit, the same day.

When will you marry, John?

Go, for they call you, shepherd, from the hill.

We are not what we think we are;  
 But what we think, we are.

The turkey strutted about the yard; two hours after,  
 his head was cut off.

And with him many of thy people, and knights  
 Once thine, whom thou hast loved, but grosser grown  
 Than heathen, spitting at their vows and thee.

(It is Sir Bedivere who is telling Arthur that it is Modred who leads the revolt against him, and that many of his former knights have joined the revolt. Parse "spitting.")

Then answer'd Mary, "This shall never be,  
 That thou shouldst take my trouble on thyself:  
 And, now I think, he shall not have the boy,  
 For he will teach him hardness, and to slight  
 His mother.

—TENNYSON: *Dora*.

(Mary is the wife of William, who has married her against his father's wishes. After William dies Dora tries to reconcile William's father and Mary. But the father is angry, telling Dora that he will take the young child and bring him up but that he never wants to see Dora's face again. It is after Dora returns to Mary, having left the child with its grandfather, that Mary uses the words printed above. The interesting part of the extract is in the third line.)

*Desdemona.* Do not doubt, Cassio,  
 But I will have my lord and you again  
 As friendly as you were.

—*Othello*, III, iii.

What do you think! I will shave you for nothing and give you a drink.

What! do you think I will shave you for nothing and give you a drink?

(The first of the two preceding lines was painted on a sign outside a barber shop. But after customers had been shaved they were apologetically told that the sign in front had been wrongly punctuated; that it should have read as it is printed in the second sentence.)

*You stole the money, and you have woven a plot to lay the sin at my door. But you may prosper, for all that: there is no just God, that governs the earth righteously, but a God of lies, that bears witness against the innocent.*—ELIOT: *Silas Marner*.

(George Eliot knew how to punctuate and you must not destroy her meaning by overlooking certain significant commas in the sentence you have just been reading.)

For we are all, like swimmers in the sea,  
 Poised on the top of a huge wave of fate,  
 Which hangs uncertain to which side to fall.  
 —ARNOLD: *Sohrab and Rustum*.

(*Are we all like swimmers in the sea?*)

But when the next sun brake from underground,  
 Then, these two brethren slowly with bent brows  
 Accompanying, the sad chariot-bier  
 Past like a shadow thro' the field, that shone  
 Full-summer, to that stream whereon the barge,  
 Pall'd all its length in blackest samite, lay.  
 There sat the lifelong creature of the house,  
 Loyal, the dumb old servitor, on deck,  
 Winking his eyes, and twisted all his face.

—TENNYSON: *Lancelot and Elaine*.

(There are several catches in the above extract. It is a splendid warning against hasty reading. Note commas after "then," "accompanying," "field," "samite." Parse "twisted.")

Robert of Sicily, brother of Pope Urbane  
 And Valmond, Emperor of Allemaine,  
 Appareled in magnificent attire,  
 With retinue of many a knight and squire,  
 On St. John's eve, at vespers, proudly sat  
 And heard the priests chant the "magnificat."  
 And as he listened, o'er and o'er again  
 Repeated, like a burden or refrain,  
 He caught the words, "Deposit potentes  
 De sede et exaltavit humiles";  
 And slowly lifting up his kingly head  
 He to a learned clerk beside him said,  
 "What means those words?" The clerk made  
 answer meet,  
 "He has put down the mighty from their seat,  
 And has exalted them of low degree."

—LONGFELLOW: *King Robert of Sicily*.

(In the first two lines you find the difficult problem. It is almost impossible to get the meaning the first time; but the commas will help you. The commas after "listen," and "repeated" need careful attention.)

When shall we three meet again  
 In thunder, lightning, or in rain?

—*Macbeth*, I, i.

(I have heard many, many actresses and occasionally a student read the above speech of the first witch as if it were printed:

When shall we three meet again?  
In thunder, lightning, or in rain?

Prove that such an interpretation is nonsense.)

Whirling and boiling and roaring like thunder, the stream came down upon them.

England, or the nation of shopkeepers, would never be asked to join such an alliance.

England or France might be asked to join the alliance.

*Ross.* Ah, good father,  
Thou seest, the heavens, as troubled with man's act,  
Threaten his bloody stage.

While you are revelling in the delights (?) of the London season, I am leading a hermit life, with no companions save my books.

On this shelf you will put books and pamphlets published in the present year.

On this shelf you will put books, and pamphlets published in the present year.

Histories make men wise; poets, witty; the mathematics, subtle; natural philosophy, deep; moral, grave; logic and rhetoric, able to contend.—BACON.

Men will wrangle for religion; write for it; fight for it; die for it; anything but—*live for it*.

“Shall I bend low and in a bondman's key,  
With bated breath and whispering humbleness,  
Say this:  
'Fair sir, you spit on me on Wednesday last;  
You spurn'd me such a day; another time  
You call'd me dog; and for these courtesies  
I'll lend you thus much moneys' ”?

—*The Merchant of Venice*, I, iii.

Lo! in the middle of the wood,  
The folded leaf is wo'd from out the bnd  
With winds upon the branch, and there  
Grows green and broad, and takes no care,  
Sun-steep'd at noon, and in the moon  
Nightly dew-fed; and turning yellow  
Falls, and floats adown the air.

—TENNYSON: *The Lotos Eaters.*

Then, stand there and hear  
The bird's quiet singing, that tells us  
What life is, so clear.

Why strikes he not, the foremost one,  
Where murder's sternest deeds are done?

And he call'd "Left wheel into line!" and they wheel'd  
and obey'd.

—TENNYSON: *The Heavy Brigade.*

Salute all them that have the rule over you, and all  
the Saints.—THE BIBLE.

But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only,  
deluding your own selves.—THE BIBLE.

A husband and father has done something that his  
wife and daughter do not like, and the mother defend-  
ing him says:

He can't help it, because he doesn't look at things  
just the way we do.

(Is the comma used correctly? Look closely. Does  
the mother mean, "It isn't his fault if he doesn't look  
at things just the way we do"; or does she mean,  
"He simply cannot help it; and the reason is that he  
doesn't look at things just the way we do"? In other

words, the comma *seems* to tell us that the second interpretation is correct, and that "it" refers to the act which the mother and daughter did not like. But I incline to believe that, in the light of the rest of the story, the author didn't mean that, and that the comma crept in through an oversight. A very small matter, to be sure, but how much difference the comma makes in the reading aloud!)

A dark, blue sediment was in the bottle.

A dark blue bottle contained the sediment.

She wore a bright, red dress.

She wore a bright red dress.

He took it, looked at it, and opened it.

He took it, looked at it and opened it.

He received congratulatory letters from Clark, Underwood, Bryan and Tillman of South Carolina.

(Comment on the last group.)

Only a few minutes after the smoke cleared away and I saw the mountain in the distance.

(Punctuate and then read.)

I watched while he searched the room.

I watched, while he searched the room.

(Two radically different meanings. Explain. Read aloud.)

He left the room leisurely.

He left the room, leisurely.

United, we stand; divided, we fall.

The prince, his father being dead, succeeded.

For the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

His stories, which made everybody laugh, were often made to order.

They passed the cup to the stranger, who drank heartily.

Hail to ye heralds, of Zeus and of men the messengers sacred!

Forward, and fear not! not you I blame, but your king, Agamemnon.

They are reliable, painstaking, men we can depend upon.

All things that are, are with more spirit chased than enjoyed.

Whatever is, is right.

Punish, guide, instruct the boy.

The vain are easily obliged, and easily disengaged.

Strong proofs, not a loud voice, produce conviction.

Though black, yet comely; and though rash, benign.

Learning is the ally, not the adversary, of genius.

Though deep, yet clear; though gentle, yet not dull; Strong, without rage; without o'erflowing, full.

Sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish, I give my hand and my heart to this vote.

The Venetian Senate entered into an alliance with the Emperor, Charles V., and the Pope, Paul III.

William was slain, leaving one child, Alice.

Patience, I say; your mind perhaps may change.

Under certain conditions commas would be adequate marks of separation in the sentence; under other conditions, the semicolon; why semicolons *and* dashes?

The highest rank;—a splendid fortune;—and a name, glorious till it was yours,—were sufficient to have supported you with meaner abilities than I think you possess.

The highest rank, a splendid fortune, and a name, glorious till it was yours, were sufficient to have supported you with meaner abilities than I think you possess.

The highest rank; a splendid fortune; and a name glorious till it was yours, were sufficient to have supported you with meaner abilities than I think you possess.

. . . lowliness is young ambition's ladder,  
Whereto the climber-upward turns his face.

—*Julius Caesar.*

(What difference would it make if the hyphen were omitted in the above sentence?)

Well—I don't know—that is—no, I cannot accept it.

What does this honorable person mean by “a tempest that outrides the wind”?

Hast thou never cried, “What must I do to be saved”?

But I boldly cried out, “Woe unto this city!”

Alas, how few of them can say, “I have striven to the very utmost”!

How fearful was the cry: “Help, or we perish”!

The I-believe-of-Eastern derivation monosyllable  
"Bosh."

Peace-at-any-rate principles.

The one-day seen Sir Launcelot.

These nine-year-fought-for-diamonds.

A fellow in a market-town,  
Most musical, cried "Razors!" up and down,  
And offered twelve for eighteen pence;  
Which certainly seemed wondrous cheap,  
And for the money quite a heap,  
As every man would buy, with cash and sense.

"It isn't that," said Scrooge, heated by the remark  
and speaking unconsciously like his former, not his  
latter, self: "It isn't that, Spirit."

Little need to speak  
Of LanceLOT in his glory! King, duke, earl,  
Count, baron—whom he smote he overthrew.  
—TENNYSON: *The Passing of Arthur*.

The bugle sounded; cavalry charged, sabers clashed,  
cannon roared; the battle was on!

The bugle sounded, cavalry charged, sabers clashed,  
cannon roared, the battle was on.

The bugle sounded; cavalry charged; sabers clashed;  
cannon roared; the battle was on!

The Duke of Portland warmly approved of the work,  
but justly remarked that the king was not "so absolute a  
thing of straw" as he was represented in it.

"What have you done?" said one of Balfour's brother  
officers. "My duty," said Balfour firmly. "Is it not  
written, 'Thou shalt be zealous even to slaying'?"

Before long, Beckey received not only "the best" foreigners (as the phrase is in our noble and admirable society slang), but some of "the best" English people too.

And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn over her [Babylon], for no man buyeth their merchandise any more; merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stone, and pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet; and all thyine wood, and every vessel of ivory, and every vessel made of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble; and cinnamon, and spice, and incense, and ointment, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and cattle, and sheep; and merchandise of horses and chariots and slaves; and souls of men.—*Revelation*, XVIII, 11, 12, 13.

And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in mid heaven, Come and be gathered together unto the great supper of God; that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses and of them that sit thereon, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, and small and great.—*Ibid.*, XIX, 17, 18.

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers.

A Scotch mist became a shower; and a shower, a flood; and a flood, a storm; and a storm, a tempest, thunder, and lightning; and thunder and lightning, heaven-quake and earth-quake.

Hector, and ye who lead the troops of Troy  
And our auxiliars! rashly do we seek  
To urge our rapid steeds across the trench  
So hard to pass, beset with pointed stakes,—

And the Greek wall so near. The troops of horse  
 Cannot descend nor combat there: the space  
 Is narrow: they would all be slain.

—*Iliad* (Bryant's translation).

We know what master laid thy keel,  
 What workman wrought thy ribs of steel,  
 Who made each mast, and sail, and rope,  
 What anvils rang, what hammers beat,  
 In what a forge, and what a heat,  
 Were shaped the anchors of thy hope!

—LONGFELLOW: *Ship of State*.

Neither blindness, nor gout, nor age, nor penury, nor  
 domestic afflictions, nor political disappointments, nor  
 abuse, nor proscription, nor neglect, had power to dis-  
 turb his sedate and majestic patience.—MACAULAY:  
*Essay on Milton*.

The sun, the moon, the stars, the seas, the hills, and the  
 plains,—  
 Are not these, O Soul, the Vision of Him who reigns?

—TENNYSON.

Days, months, years, and ages, shall circulate away,  
 And still the vast waters above thee shall roll.

—DIAMOND: *The Sailor Boy's Dream*.

I know not, my daughter.

The old man smiled, and, for a few moments, sat  
 buried in thought. He then said to them: "I, too, have  
 lived to see all the hopes of my youth turn into shadows,  
 clouds, and darkness, and vanish into nothing."

"Under the porch away down low,"  
 The cricket chirruped in rare delight.  
 "Is the place, I know  
 For us all to go;  
 There's not the tiniest ray of light!"

It has not been my purpose to teach you how to punctuate nor to ask you to give reasons for every punctuation point you find on the printed page. Only such uses of punctuation are discussed as are likely to be misunderstood or ignored by the student, with the result that he incorrectly interprets both for himself and when he reads aloud for others.

Unfortunately authors and publishers are not a unit in their use of punctuation; but this much is sure: in standard editions of works of the great authors past and present there are well-defined principles of punctuation. There may be differences in details among authors; but if our study has not been in vain the student will have become keen enough by this time to understand that fundamentally there is agreement among them. Moreover we have learned to pay particular attention to the punctuation, first, because it helps us to get the meaning, and secondly, because that meaning will vitally affect the vocal expression.

## CHAPTER XIV

### CONNOTATION

In the study of the mark of exclamation your attention was called to two significant passages, which I repeat:

He must not suspect!

and

But she is in her grave, and, oh,  
The difference to me!

What do they denote? Briefly, the first says that a certain woman did a certain thing that she might prevent a certain man from suspecting what she was planning to do to save his life. The second says that someone is in her grave and I exclaim that this fact makes quite a difference to me. Another example: "Twice two are four; twice three are six; twice four are eight." Imagine these are the words of a father to a son who has been extravagant as though there were no end to money, and the father says, "My son, you can't go on like this, spending money with no thought of the future: remember, 'twice two are four; twice three are six; twice four are eight'!" Is there any thought or suggestiveness in those words now that was not there before?

Recall the passage from *Enoch Arden* ending with:

A shipwreck'd sailor waiting for a sail!

And again: Shylock is asked whether, in case Antonio fails to pay him the three thousand ducats, he will insist on a pound of Antonio's flesh; and further, he is asked what is the good of a pound of flesh, whereupon he snaps back:

To bait fish withal; and if it will feed nothing else, it will feed my revenge.

Do Shylock's first words mean merely that Antonio's flesh will prove very good bait for fishing?

In the play, *The Blue Bird*, are two children so poor that they have cakes but twice a year. When they are asked whether they ever have cakes, one answers:

Oh, yes, on New Year's and the fourteenth of July.

Nearly everyone who hears or reads that answer laughs at "the fourteenth of July," thinking it to be a slip on the little boy's part intended for "the fourth of July." But the laugh springs from our ignorance that this play is laid in France, and that to Frenchmen "the fourteenth of July" has exactly the same meaning as "the fourth of July" has for Americans,—it is France's Independence Day. So you see the passage isn't funny, and the laugh is on us for laughing at it.

There is no single sentence in all the parables more exquisitely beautiful and touching than:

But while he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

Could anything be simpler in its denotation? The most hurried reading will give us the bald facts, but where in all literature is there a more noble and uplifting connotation than in the words: "But while he was yet a great way off, his father saw him"? A great way off,—a great way off, the father saw him. To paraphrase that is to destroy its beauty. Say it again, over and over, while its marvelous connotation possesses you entirely. "And ran"—that in two words is all a father's heart: "and ran," "and fell on his neck, and kissed him."

And lastly: there is not much to love in the character of Shylock; but Shakespeare's art in softening his character is wonderfully manifested in one brief passage, the full significance of which few people see. They not only fail to get Shakespeare's purpose; they get a meaning the very reverse of what he intended. They are moved through their ignorance to hearty laughter where the poet's evident intention is to arouse, for a moment at least, a touch of pity for old Shylock.

Jessica, Shylock's only child, has eloped, taking with her much money and many "precious, precious" jewels belonging to her father. Tubal, Shylock's friend, goes to Genoa in search of her, but cannot find her. All he learns is that she is spending Shylock's money recklessly: in one night she throws away "four-score ducats," and Shylock bemoans his loss with:

Thou stick'st a dagger in me. I shall never see my gold again.

Tubal continues, after telling of his meeting with some of Antonio's creditors:

One of them showed me a ring that he had of your daughter for a monkey.

*Shylock.* Out upon her! Thou tortur'est me, Tubal: it was my turquoise; I had it of Leah, when I was a bachelor. I would not have given it for a wilderness of monkeys.

Again the audience bursts into laughter, no doubt admiring the mighty poet for his cleverness. And yet here is a passage of tenderest feeling. Shylock, the money lender, the miser, he who screams and howls when he hears that Jessica spent in one night fourscore ducats, is still a lover carrying in his heart the enshrined image of his beloved wife. One glimpse of what was best in him is permitted to us, and we, through sheer ignorance, miss it entirely. "Monkey" in Shakespeare's day represented a good sized sum of money—many, many ducats. The turquoise was a much more precious stone in Shakespeare's time than it is now, but even so the ring could scarcely have been worth beyond the sum Jessica sold it for. Again, Shylock has just told Tubal that among the jewels stolen by Jessica was a diamond worth alone two thousand ducats. Now let us bring all these facts together. Here is a diauond gone that cost two thousand ducats; here is the news of Jessica's spending fourscore ducats at one sitting, and these losses are daggers stuck into Shylock's heart. But when he hears that his turquoise is gone all sense of money

value leaves him. This little turquoise ring brings back his early love, his beloved Leah, and perhaps the days when Christian persecution had not poisoned his soul. His heart softens at the tender memory and vents its agony in the piteous cry: "Oh, Tubal! Tubal! thou breakest my heart! My ring! my Leah's ring! For a monkey? a monkey? Oh, I would not have parted with it for a wilderness of monkeys!" A pun, to be sure, but a grim, ghastly joke, springing from an aching heart. All that was best and highest and noblest and most human in poor Shylock finds expression in those four words. Hate, despair, money lust, revenge, are gone; and, in their stead, only the memory of his early love, his Leah.

Long before this you doubtless have discovered why we have been spending so much time on passages many of which were studied in previous chapters. The purpose was to demonstrate that words have two aspects: to define and to suggest; and that of the two the latter is in literature by far the more significant.

I am under great obligation to Professor Barrett Wendell for his treatment of Denotation and Connotation. I can therefore do no better than let him speak directly to you. I quote from his *English Composition*. I am taking a few, a very few, liberties with the original text:

Every word [every group of words in the sense in which "group" is used throughout this book] names something in such a way as to identify it; [and further] it *suggests* along with it a very subtle and variable set of associated ideas and emotions.

Denotation and Connotation go hand in hand. We do not in our reading make any effort to keep them apart, but that they can be discussed separately Professor Wendell clearly demonstrates. We must know what a word denotes or its connotation is lost upon us, and not to be affected by the connotative aspect of literature is to miss literature itself. A simple thing is Connotation, but it includes everything in life. It is the associations of the home, the class, business, our sports and pastimes, that make them pleasant or unpleasant, and it is association that determines whether literature shall or shall not appeal to us.

Why do public speakers ring all the changes on "our beloved country," "the flag," "the Stars and Stripes," "George Washington," and "Abraham Lincoln"? Because they are magic words stirring us through their suggestiveness, their connotation, often-times to reckless, uncontrolled enthusiasm.

Of course, the connotation of a word is different for different people, and even for the same individual at different times; but the greatest artists are those whose genius leads them to select those words that arouse in the largest number of their readers the associated thoughts and emotions which "cluster" about a given idea.

Think for a moment over some of the examples in the preceding pages of this chapter: "the fourteenth of July," "my turquoise," and "ran." Is it not marvelous, the power of these commonplace words!

But in order that we may get the fullest connotation out of any passage, we must, granted we have the

denotation, go slowly, dwelling, lingering on a word or on a line—lazing over it, as it were. Wordsworth, in *The Daffodils*, says, after describing a field of daffodils :

I gazed—and gazed—but little thought  
What wealth the show to me had brought:  
For oft, when on my couch I lie  
    In vacant or in pensive mood,  
They flash upon that inward eye  
    Which is the bliss of solitude,  
And then my heart with pleasure fills,  
    And dances with the daffodils.

“I gazed—and gazed.” (How much connotation in the dashes; commas would have expressed the bare fact!) That’s just what we won’t do: we won’t gaze long enough to permit the picture, the idea, to possess us wholly. True, sometimes our whole being is stirred instantly by some word, some reference: the connotation is present almost as soon as the denotation; but the fullest connotation cannot be realized by the hurried, careless reader. “The wealth” comes only to those who “gaze—and gaze.”

Hurry, hurry, is the greatest enemy of literary appreciation and enjoyment. Only things of little worth can be got in a hurry. You can take in at a glance the twenty-foot sign advertising PERKINS’ GHERKINS, but the landscape which the bill board desecrates will give up its richest beauty only to those who look at it again and again. So it is with a line of literature.

Since we are now in a mood to gaze and gaze, let

us take leave of the subject with the discussion of two sentences simple in denotation, most stirring in their connotation.

The democratic patriot Brutus cannot endure the idea that Rome shall be under one man's rule. This makes it the easier for Cassius to induce him to join the conspiracy. Cassius ends the first part of his speech of instigation with the word "alone." What connotation in that for noble Brutus!

Ye gods, it doth amaze me  
A man of such a feeble temper should  
So get the start of the majestic world  
And bear the palm alone.

At this moment the distant cheering of the mob comes to Brutus' ears, and he says:

I do believe that these applauses are  
For some new honors that are heaped on Caesar;

whereon Cassius retorts:

Why, man, he doth bestride the narrow world  
Like a Colossus, and we petty men  
Walk under his huge legs and peep about  
To find ourselves dishonorable graves.

Often as you have read those lines, have you until now appreciated Shakespeare's art in using them? "Bestride," "Colossus" (think of the proud Brutus picturing himself a pigmy walking—so tall is this Colossus—under Caesar's huge legs), and "peeping" (the very sound of that word is alive with connotation,

especially in contrast with the sound in “huge”) and “dishonorable graves.” Ah, you must know the denotation of “bestride” and “Colossus,” or lose the connotation; but granted the denotation in Brutus’ case, how he must have been swept on, stoic though he was, by the connotative appeal in Cassius’ impassioned words.

At Linden was fought a battle of which the poet sings in his great war lyric, *Hohenlinden*. The opening words are:

On Linden, when the sun was low,  
All bloodless lay th’ untrodden snow.

Linger over the picture. See it, and catch the thrill of that moment when, through the magic of words, we feel ourselves in the presence of what is to be. “All bloodless” is the ominous suggestion of what the next day’s sun will reveal. “Th’ untrodden snow”! All snow as it falls is “untrodden.” The denotation and connotation here unite to produce an effect that makes the heart beat high as we stand before the curtain which, when it rises, shall reveal the awful horrors of war.

A sentence from Wendell would seem to apply to those words: “Yet the force of this [statement] lies not in what is actually said, but wholly in what is implied, suggested, connotated.”

Does not the sentence in the following paragraph from Professor Bates’s *Talks on Writing English* explain why we are interested in and enjoy the various connotations discussed throughout this chapter?

The thing which the writer has caused the reader to think—or even to suppose himself to think—is sure to interest him. The dullest of bores is absorbed in his own words, and in effect that which the reader receives by suggestion is his own thought. What is denoted is the word of the writer; what is connoted is for the time being the thought of the reader.

And a second paragraph from Professor Bates:

Since the secret of Force lies in connotation, in the suggestiveness which leads the mind onward into the mood so that it seems to itself to originate the ideas which are really given to it directly or indirectly by the author, it follows that in the use of figures is one of the most effectual means of securing this quality. Job says, "My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle," and with the plain statement of the brevity of life come suggestions of the inevitableness of this brevity; we seem to see man tossed by the hand of the unseen, as a shuttle is thrown by the hand of the weaver, flung to and fro without power to stay or to resist. The whole despairing mood of the afflicted patriarch is summed up in the single simile. To come nearer to our own times, take that simile which is perhaps the most beautiful in English literature outside of Shakespeare:

Fair as a star when only one  
Is shining in the sky.

What is suggested is all the serenity of the eventide; the hush which comes between the daylight and the dark; the sense of peace; that feeling that a mystery is being wrought before our very eyes, when out of the faintly rose-purple haze of the sky throbs into radiance the first star. There is, too, that sense of restfulness that belongs to the twilight coolness, and, in some unde-

finable way, an idea of the purity and innocence too high and too subtle to be defined.

It may be asked, then, why the reader needs to have his attention called to Connotation, since its appeal to the imagination is instantaneous, and doesn't have to be worked out like a problem in geometry. True, it doesn't: but I wanted to impress upon you that authors use words deliberately to touch the imagination; and, furthermore, I would convince you that while you can dig out the facts in books of information, the appeal that literature makes comes only to those who gaze and gaze. To catch the glory of one great line of poetry is forever to be poetic. It is experience we seek in literature, not knowledge; it is the joy, the ecstasy, the delight of sharing with an artist his vision of what most mortals would not see without him. You can't be examined on what is best in literature, on the soul of things; you can only like or dislike; appreciate or ignore.

But I have dwelt on Connotation so long to show you that, although it appeals to us directly, without study (when we know the denotation), we *must dwell*, we must come with open mind, leisurely, for pleasure's sake; not frivolously, nor yet with the contracted brow of the philosopher; but in a mood, shall I say? pleasantly serious, or seriously playful.

Revelatory as the discussion of Connotation has been, it has merely emphasized what we have always known: that words are suggestive, and that they stir us emotionally. But have we not learned the greatest of all lessons in connection with the study of litera-

ture? learned that it can't be taught: that it can only be presented to you for your acceptance or rejection? You have come to see that it appeals not to the practical or scientific side of your nature, but to the imaginative; that its purpose is to give you "delight," as Lowell says, through the arousal of the emotions; and Connotation is the most important element in stirring the imagination and arousing the feelings. Your "delight" is in the pictures, ideas, thoughts, characters, music, of the verse and prose which is called literature. You have come to see now that without denotation the connotation may escape you entirely; and, best of all, you see that all you know of life, art, history, science, nature, the wider will for you be the connotation of literature.

There are no "Review Exercises" in this chapter. Every illustration in the book has exemplified Connotation, and much of the pleasure and advantage you have derived from your study has been connotative; but I purposely avoided calling your attention to it earlier because I wanted you to discover it for yourself, even though you never called it by that name. You were richly rewarded (were you not?) for the time you spent in studying Grouping and Punctuation and Central Idea, and the rest; but you little thought what wealth to you that study had brought in Connotation.

And it is the connotation that makes literature great. David did not sing "The Lord is my shepherd," and "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God"; Milton

did not sing, "Eyeless, in Gaza, at the mill, with slaves"; nor did Shakespeare sing his thousand thousand melodies—to give us facts for class study! They saw the beauty of the universe and sang it for us.

It is the beauty about us in man and nature that stirs the artist's heart and is the impulse to create. It is what the ordinary man fails to see that moves the artist's soul and urges him to expression, whether he be painter or sculptor or poet. To arouse deep feeling—of joy or pity or indignation or love—that is art's mission. Everything in literature depends upon the connotation. And the connotation depends upon our experience, our temperament, our education. What moves me may not move others, and what stirs them may leave me cold. But the greatest artist is he whose appeal is most nearly universal, to all peoples and to all times.

## CHAPTER XV

### EMOTION

In *The Merchant of Venice* Antonio, who hates Shylock, frequently calls him "a dog." Later Antonio asks Shylock to lend him money, and the latter says "Hath a dog money?" It is not difficult to understand what Shylock means, but how he *feels* is quite another matter. He may be merely bitter; or again, he may be smiling his sarcasm; or, he may be deeply angered. Read the passage according to the suggested markings:

Hath a dog money? (as a simple, unemotional question).

Hath a dog money? (with a smile, sarcastically).

Hath a dog money? (angrily, and with a sneer).

In all cases the denotation is the same, but the connotation is radically different every time you read it, the difference depending on Shylock's feeling; and unless we understand that and, in fact, enter to some degree into it, we do not understand the passage in the true sense of the word.

Astonishment and anger blend in the speech of Cassius to Brutus when he describes the weakness of this Caesar who now, according to Cassius, wishes to be king of Rome:

He had a fever when he was in Spain,  
And when the fit was on him I did mark  
How he did shake: 'tis true, this god did shake;  
His coward lips did from their color fly,  
And that same eye whose bend doth awe the world  
Did lose his lustre. I did hear him groan;  
Ay, and that tongue of his, that bade the Romans  
Mark him and write his speeches in their books,  
Alas, it cried, "Give me some drink, Titinius,"  
As a sick girl. Ye gods, it doth amaze me  
A man of such a feeble temper should  
So get the start of the majestic world  
And bear the palm alone.

—*Julius Caesar*, I, ii.

How cold and meaningless, then, would be all such passages if they were read without emotion! And more than that, I repeat, it is extremely doubtful whether one can be said really and fully to grasp them unless he does get the emotional value. A problem in chemistry or a proposition in geometry would be ridiculous if read with emotion. These are essentially unemotional; but contrariwise, how spoiled would be Whitman's beautiful and touching poem on the death of Lincoln if the emotional element were lacking in the reading. Read it aloud:

O Captain! my Captain! our fearful trip is done,  
The ship has weather'd every raek, the prize we sought  
is won,  
The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,  
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and  
daring;  
But O heart! heart! heart!  
O the bleeding drops of red,

Where on the deck my Captain lies,  
Fallen cold and dead.

O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;  
Rise up—for you the flag is flung—for you the bugle  
trills,  
For you bouquets and ribbon'd wreaths—for you the  
shores a-crowding,  
For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces  
turning;  
Hear Captain! dear father!  
This arm beneath your head!  
It is some dream that on the deck,  
You've fallen cold and dead.

My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still,  
My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will,  
The ship is anchor'd safe and sound, its voyage closed  
and done,  
From fearful trip the victor ship comes in with object  
won;  
Exult, O shores, and ring, O bells!  
But I with mournful tread,  
Walk the deck my Captain lies,  
Fallen cold and dead.

—WHITMAN: *O Captain! My Captain!*

Many students seem to be ashamed to express emotion in their reading; others believe they cannot express it vocally; but both classes are mistaken. Observe them, at home, on the playground, and they overflow with feeling of one kind and another. Let these students once understand how much they lose of the pleasure of literature by ignoring the emotional element; let them once experience the joy of fullest expression, and they will soon find they *can* express

the feeling. Perhaps, too, there are some who have come to believe that it is a sign of weakness or childishness to express emotion; but consider for a moment that the very essence of life is feeling; that all art, and particularly the art of literature, is in the last analysis not much but feeling, and the self-consciousness, which is the chief drawback to full expression, is more than likely to disappear.

To show the importance of the emotional content let us examine some passages from great authors in which the emotion is described, in order that there may be no doubt in the reader's mind concerning it. Surely, if an author goes to the pains of describing the feeling with which certain words are uttered, we cannot read those words aloud and do justice to the author's intention unless we manifest the emotion in our own voices. Even if we do not read aloud, it is impossible for us to enter into the spirit of the text unless we experience to some degree the emotion as described by the author.

Read the next scene, from George Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss*:

"Well, but, Tom, you know if mother let me give you two half crowns you could buy some more rabbits with it."

"More rabbits? I don't want any more."

"Oh, but, Tom, they're all dead."

"You forgot to feed 'em, then?" he said, his color heightening. "I don't love you, Maggie. You shan't go fishing with me tomorrow. I told you to go and see the rabbits every day."

"Yes. But I forgot—and I couldn't help it. Tom.

I'm very sorry," said Maggie, while the tears rushed fast.

"You're a naughty girl," said Tom, severely, "and I'm sorry I bought you the fish-line. I don't love you."

"Oh, Tom," sobbed Maggie, "I'd forgive you if you forgot anything—I'd forgive you and love you."

"Yes, you're a silly; but I never *do* forget things—I don't. You're a naughty girl, and you shan't go fishing with me tomorrow."

With this terrible conclusion, Tom ran away from Maggie toward the mill.

When you came to the words, "You forgot to feed 'em, then?" you could not tell at once how Tom felt. The words themselves do not suggest the emotion; it might have been merely a simple question on Tom's part. But as you read further the author adds, "he said, his color heightening." Under the circumstances what does his heightening color connote? You may answer "anger"; but heightening color does not always suggest anger. Then you read still further and see that he really is angry. Now that you have found how he feels, you can read the line with Tom's emotion.

Take the next little paragraph, which contains Maggie's answer. Not until you come to the author's description of Maggie's tears do you understand how she felt. She really is weeping when she says the word "yes," but there is no way for the person who is reading at sight to know that. There are a hundred ways in which to utter the word "yes," but there is only one right way in this particular case.

A few lines further, after Tom has told Maggie he

doesn't love her, she says, "Oh, Tom," but you cannot tell what her feeling is until you get to the description "sobbed Maggie." If, then, you want your audience to get the true picture of Maggie you must get the sobbing mood *before* you speak the words "Oh, Tom," etc. This principle, that you must get the mood before you can read the words with the right feeling, applies to every group you read aloud. You must never forget that the *author or character feels before he expresses*, and that we, therefore, in representing that author or character, must do likewise.

Furthermore, you must not forget that the emotion may change many times within one paragraph or scene. In the following, from Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, there is a great deal of emotional variety:

"A merry Christmas, uncle! God save you!" cried a cheerful voice. It was the voice of Scrooge's nephew, who came upon him so quickly that this was the first intimation Scrooge had of his approach.

"Bah!" said Scrooge; "humbug!"

"Christmas a humbug, uncle? You don't mean that. I am sure."

"I do," said Scrooge. "Merry Christmas! What right have you to be merry? What reason have you to be merry? You're poor enough."

"Come, then," returned the nephew gayly. "What right have you to be dismal? You're rich enough."

Scrooge having no better answer ready, said "Bah!" again and followed it up with "Humbug!"

"Don't be cross, uncle!" said the nephew.

"What else can I be," returned the uncle, "when I live in such a world of fools as this? If I had my will, every idiot who goes about with 'Merry Christmas' on

his lips should be boiled with his own pudding and buried with a stake of holly through his heart. He should!"

"Uncle!"

"Nephew, keep Christmas in your own way, and let me keep it in mine."

"Keep it! But you don't keep it."

"Let me leave it alone, then. Much good may it do you! Much good it has ever done you!"

Uncle, though it has never put a scrap of gold or silver in my pocket, I believe that it *has* done me good, and *will* do me good; and I say, God bless it!"

Scrooge, a bitter, mean, sour old miser, is sitting in his office on Christmas eve when his nephew bursts into the room. In the opening paragraph there are three distinct moods: first, the joy of the nephew; then, your rather bright comment on the nephew's voice; and third, the simple explanation of the visit. The reply of Scrooge shows all his contempt for Christmas. His mood is what we call familiarly "grouchy"; then note the surprise in the nephew's rejoinder "Christmas a humbug, uncle?" and so on, the mood changing in almost every group to the end.

In the next example the moods are not so strongly contrasted as in the Dickens scene. Sometimes it is only a question of degree of the same mood, as in the opening lines. This speech is a continuation of the scene we have already studied in *Julius Caesar*. When one of the leaders of the mob has told Marullus, after much joking, that the citizens have been making a holiday to see Caesar and to rejoice in his triumph, Marullus, who dislikes Caesar, retorts:

Wherefore rejoice? What conquest brings he home?  
What tributaries follow him to Rome,  
To grace in captive bonds his chariot wheels?

His anger grows with each group. This increasing emotion is suggested by the printing:

*Wherefore rejoice?*  
WHAT CONQUEST BRINGS HE HOME?  
What tributaries follow him to Rome,  
To grace in captive bonds his chariot wheels?

By this method of marking I do not mean to say that Marullus shouts more loudly with each succeeding group, but that his passion increases. The anger grows still more intense as he sweeps on:

YOU BLOCKS, YOU STONES, YOU WORSE THAN  
SENSELESS THINGS!

Then comes to him the memory of the love the citizens formerly bore to Pompey, whose sons Caesar has just overthrown in battle, and his mood softens: he is not so angry as he is grieved over their ingratitude. He seems to chide rather tenderly (just as your teacher might say, when you had done something he felt to be unworthy of you, "It is too bad that a fellow like you should do a thing like that") when he says:

O you hard hearts, you cruel men of Rome;  
but at this point a new thought flashes across his mind:

Knew you not Pompey?

He is not asking a question for information; he

knows that they knew Pompey; but he means "Is it possible, after all the love you bore to Pompey, that now, when his enemy, Caesar, appears, you forget your former friend?" There is overwhelming astonishment, perhaps blended with regret, that is expressed in those four words. Read now the remainder of the paragraph silently, studying it carefully for the various moods, and then read the entire speech aloud and convey to the listeners its emotion:

Many a time and oft  
 Have you climb'd up to walls and battlements,  
 To towers and windows, yea, to chimney tops,  
 Your infants in your arms, and there have sat  
 The livelong day, with patient expectation,  
 To see great Pompey pass the streets of Rome;  
 And when you saw his chariot but appear,  
 Have you not made an universal shout,  
 That Tiber trembled underneath her banks,  
 To hear the replication of your sounds  
 Made in her concave shores?  
 And do you now put on your best attire?  
 And do you now cull out a holiday?  
 And do you now strew flowers in his way,  
 That comes in triumph over Pompey's blood?  
 Begone!  
 Run to your houses, fall upon your knees,  
 Pray to the gods to intermit the plague  
 That needs must light on this ingratitude.

The following bit of nonsense is a good exercise in vocal variety:

One hot day, last summer, a young man, dressed in thin clothes, entered a Broadway car, and, seating himself opposite a stout old gentleman, said, pleasantly:

"Pretty warm, isn't it?"

"What's pretty warm?"

"Why, the weather."

"What weather?"

"Why, this weather."

"Well, how's this different from any other weather?"

"Well, it's warmer."

"How do you know it is?"

"I suppose it is."

"Isn't the weather the same everywhere?"

"Why, n-o,—no; it's warmer in some places, and colder in others."

"What makes it warmer in some places than it's colder in others?"

"Why, the sun,—the effect of the sun's heat."

"Makes it colder in some places than it's warmer in others? Never heard of such a thing."

"No, no, no,—I didn't mean that. The sun makes it warmer."

"Then what makes it colder?"

"I believe it's the ice."

"What ice?"

"Why, the ice—the i-c-e—the ice that was frozen by—by—by the frost."

"Have you ever seen any ice that wasn't frozen?"

"No. That is, I don't believe I have."

"Then what are you talking about?"

"I was just trying to talk about the weather."

"And what do you know about it?—what do you know about the weather?"

"Well, I thought I knew something; but I see I don't, and that's a fact."

"No, sir; I should say you didn't! Yet you come into this car, and force yourself on the attention of a stranger, and begin to talk about the weather, just as if you owned it; and I find you don't know a solitary thing about the matter."—*The Weather Fiend.*

There is nothing new about this aspect of interpretation. We are continually feeling and expressing our feeling; why, then, are we so diffident in vocal expression? Let us suppose that school is dismissed and that as you leave someone asks you where you are going, and that you answer carelessly: "Oh, I'm going home." Your manner indicates that you are simply stating a fact. Suppose, however, that in the midst of a highly interesting game of football your father insists upon your going home at once and that you reluctantly leave the game. On your way home someone asks: "Where are you going?" and you reply, "Oh, shucks, I'm going home." What a difference in your voice! Suppose you are very angry at leaving the game; express your feelings in the answer, "Oh, I'm going home!" But if you had been away to school for several months and had been longing to go home, what joy there would be in your answer if, as you were running to the train, someone asked where you were going and you called out, "Oh, I'm going home!"

You see, the variations are the result of feelings caused by the idea of going home under different circumstances. The words and meaning are in each case the same, but the feelings in your answers are radically different. The emotion affected your manner and the quality of your voice, and these, and not the words, indicated your feeling. Of course, your face and body will also be affected by the emotion and will express as much of your feeling as does your voice. But the bodily and facial expression may be safely

left to take care of themselves. It is then what you are experiencing emotionally—whether you are angry, or glad, or sorry, etc., that determines the expression of the feeling. This is what we mean by “emotional values.” In our daily lives we are constantly expressing values: we express ourselves as being gay, or sad, or dejected; but when it comes to reading aloud we frequently fail to express the emotion.

I have heard a scene from the third chapter of *Silas Marner* utterly spoiled through the failure of the student to observe the emotional values. You remember that Godfrey Cass has married Molly Farren without the knowledge of his father. Godfrey's brother, Dunsey, knows the secret, and compels his brother to give him money to remain silent. Godfrey, without his father's knowledge, has collected the rent from one of the tenants and handed it over to Dunsey. The father is impatient to have the rent (not knowing it has been paid), and is threatening to turn out the tenant unless he pays. In great distress Godfrey sends for his brother, who comes, and the following scene takes place. That the author wants the reader to understand the emotion in the brothers' speeches is seen by the pains she takes to describe details. Dunsey's first sentence is spoken in a “mocking tone,” and Godfrey answers him “savagely”; Dunsey replies “sneeringly”; and how markedly the elder brother's emotion is suggested by the sentence, “Godfrey bit his lip and clenched his fist”! This scene and the next must be read aloud with close attention to the author's suggestions regarding emotion:

It was the once hopeful Godfrey who was standing with his hands in his side-pockets and his back to the fire one late November afternoon.

The door opened, and a thick-set, heavy-looking young man entered in the first stage of intoxication. It was Dunsey.

"Well, Master Godfrey, what do you want with me?" said he, in a mocking tone.

"Why, this is what I want—and just shake yourself sober and listen, will you?" said Godfrey, savagely. "I want to tell you, I must hand over that rent of Fowler's to the Squire, or tell him I gave it you."

"Oh!" said Dunsey, sneeringly. "Suppose, now, you get the money yourself, and save me the trouble, eh? Since you was so kind as to hand it over to me, you'll not refuse me the kindness to pay it back for me; it was your brotherly love made you do it, you know."

Godfrey bit his lip and clenched his fist. "Don't come near me with that look, else I'll knock you down."

"Oh, no, you won't. Because I'm such a good-natured brother, you know. I might get you turned out of house and home, and cut off with a shilling any day. I might tell the Squire how his handsome son was married to that nice young woman, Molly Farren, and was very unhappy because he couldn't live with his drunken wife. But you see, I don't do it—I'm so easy and good-natured. You'll get the hundred pounds for me—I know you will."

In a scene later (chapter vii) there is much stress laid on the emotion. When Silas discovers the loss of his gold he suspects one of the loose characters of the village, and goes to the inn to find him.

For a few moments there was a dead silence, Marner's want of breath and agitation not allowing him to speak. The landlord . . . at last took on himself the task of adjuring the ghost.

"Master Marner," he said, in a conciliatory tone. "what's lacking to you? What's your business here?"

"Robbed!" said Silas, gaspingly. "I've been robbed! I want the constable—and the justice—and Squire Cass—and Mr. Crackenthorp."

"Lay hold on him, Jem Rodney," said the landlord, the idea of a ghost subsiding; "he's off his head, I doubt. He's wet through."

• • • • •  
"Come and lay hold on him yourself, Mr. Snell, if you've a mind," said Jem, rather sullenly. "He's been robbed, and murdered, too, for what I know," he added, in a muttering tone.

"Jem Rodney!" said Silas, turning and fixing his strange eyes on the suspected man.

"Ay, Master Marner, what do you want wi' me?" said Jem, trembling a little, and seizing his drinking-can as a defensive weapon.

"If it was you stole my money," said Silas, clasping his hands entreatingly, and raising his voice to a cry. "give it me back,—and I won't meddle with you. I won't set the constable on you. Give it me back, and I'll let you—I'll let you have a guinea."

"Me stole your money?" said Jem, angrily. "I'll pitch this can at your eye if you talk o' *my* stealing your money."

"Come, come, Master Marner," said the landlord, now rising resolutely, and seizing Marner by the shoulder, "if you've got any information to lay, speak it out sensible, and show as you're in your right mind, if you expect anybody to listen to you. You're as wet as a drowned rat. Sit down and dry yourself, and speak straightforrad."

"Ay, ay, make him sit down," said several voices at once, well pleased that the reality of ghosts remained still an open question.

Authors do not always describe so definitely as in the above scenes the feelings of the speakers, but in many cases the language, without any remark of the author, indicates the emotions. For instance, in the next example we recognize these at once, although the author does not state explicitly what they are. If you read the passage aloud you will find it difficult to keep out the emotion. In *Horseshoe Robinson's Ruse*, a story of the Revolutionary War, some English soldiers have taken refuge in a hut from danger and attack, and have left their muskets out of reach at the farther end of the room. Suddenly an American sergeant appears at the door, crying:

"I demand the surrender of all here," as he planted himself between the party and their weapons. "I will shoot down the first man who moves a foot."

"Leap to your arms!" cries the young officer who commanded the little party inside of the house. "Why do you stand?"

"I don't want to do you or your men any harm, young man," said Robinson, as he brought his rifle to a level; "but I will not leave one of you to be put upon a muster roll if you raise a hand at this moment!"

Both parties now stood for a brief space eyeing each other, in a fearful suspense. "You see," continued the sergeant, "it's not worth while fighting five to one; so take my advice, and surrender to the Continental Congress and this scrap of its army which I command."

The English officer, believing his force to be outnumbered, said:

"Lower your rifle, sir. In the presence of a superior force, taken by surprise and without arms, it is my duty to save bloodshed. With the promise of fair usage and

the rights of prisoners of war, I surrender this little foraging party under my command."

"I'll make the terms agreeable; never doubt me, sir. Officer," said the sergeant, addressing one of his subordinates, "advance and receive the arms of the prisoners!"

In the speech of both officers there is a good deal of emotion and characterization; but the author says nothing of these: the words and the situation are enough.

A very simple but convincing illustration of the power of a few words to convey emotion in dramatic narrative is found in Tennyson's *Passing of Arthur*. Anyone who fails to picture the dying king growing weaker and weaker, rebuking Sir Bedivere for deceiving him, who does not, at least to some extent, enter imaginatively into the king's moods, who does not conceive his very physical as well as mental and emotional conditions, will surely miss much of the poet's intention: certainly he cannot hope to read aloud effectively the exquisitely beautiful narrative. It is idle talk to say one understands such a scene but cannot give it emotional expression. It is not so: one *can*, if he will but strive to see the pictures vividly, *live* with them: and then, with no effort after eloquentary effect, simply express, trying only to make others see and feel what the poet has set before us.

The noble King Arthur, deserted by many of his knights, while those who have been faithful to him have fallen in battle—all but one, the "bold Sir Bedivere"—lies wounded unto death, with only Sir Bedi-

vere to comfort him. By his side lies his good sword Excalibur, which, when first he became king, rose from out the bosom of the very lake beside which he lies dying. This sword he bids Sir Bedivere take and fling into the lake from which it came, to "watch what he sees" and quickly return to his king. So over rugged rocks climbs the Knight, but when he is about to cast the sword away its marvellous beauty causes him to hesitate, and finally he hides it, and slowly returns to his king, who asks:

"What is it thou hast seen? or what hast heard?"

and answer comes:

"I heard the ripple washing in the reeds,  
And the wild water lapping on the crag."

Then the poem continues:

To whom replied King Arthur, *faint and pale*:  
"Thou hast betray'd thy nature and thy name."

And I have italicized the words denoting Arthur's condition, a condition which will appeal to your imagination, and that will in turn vitally affect your interpretation of Arthur's entire speech. Arthur continues:

"This is a shameful thing for men to lie.  
Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go again,  
As thou art lief and dear, and do the thing  
I bade thee, watch, and lightly bring me word."

Of course Arthur's indignation is evident in every line, but the vocal expression of it is strongly modified by his physical weakness, *faint and pale*.

Then Sir Bedivere goes a second time, and again he fails, and again he hides the sword:

Then spoke King Arthur, *breathing heavily*:  
 "What is it thou hast seen? or what hast heard?"  
 And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:  
 "I heard the water lapping on the crag,  
 And the long ripple washing in the reeds."  
 To whom replied King Arthur, *much in wrath*:  
 "Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue,  
 Unknightly, traitor-hearted!"

The *breathing heavily* shows Arthur's increasing weakness, but yet he rouses himself to speak *in wrath*. For the third time he commands Sir Bedivere, ending with a threat that stirs all that is best in Sir Bedivere to action:

"Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice,  
 And the third time may prosper, get thee hence;  
 But if thou spare to fling Excalibur  
 I will arise and slay thee with my hands."

The sword is thrown; lightly comes the knight to tell his story to the king. But observe Arthur's condition.

Then spoke King Arthur, *drawing thicker breath*:  
 "Now see I by thine eyes that this is done.  
 Speak out: what is it thou hast heard, or seen?"

And Sir Bedivere describes what happened after he had flung the sword.

But Arthur's end is rapidly approaching:

And answer made King Arthur, *breathing hard*:  
 "My end draws nigh; 'tis time that I were gone."

Make broad thy shoulders to receive my weight,  
And bear me to the margin; yet I fear  
My wound hath taken cold, and I shall die."

The brief phrases indicating Arthur's feelings and failing strength are apparently so insignificant compared with the dramatic element of the scene that we are more than likely to disregard them. Imagine then you were playing the part of the dying king, and you will recognize at once how weak would your portrayal be if you did not follow the author's suggestions as to all the shades of Arthur's physical and mental and emotional states.

In drama the author gives no definite description of the emotion of the speakers. Occasionally one character speaks of the emotion of another (as when Cassius, reverting to the scene between Brutus and the poet, after the Quarrel Scene, says, "I did not think you could have been so angry"), but that is rare. The reader can judge of the emotion only by the text, the situation, and the temperament of the characters.

The opening scene of *Julius Caesar* brings before us a large mob of Roman workmen making holiday because Caesar is returning triumphantly to Rome from the wars. Although we studied this scene in another connection, we have by no means exhausted its possibilities as an exercise in interpretation. A Roman tribune, who hates Caesar, is saying:

Hence! home, you idle creatures, get you home:  
Is this a holiday? What! know you not,

Being mechanical, you ought not walk  
Upon a laboring day without the sign  
Of your profession? Speak, what trade art thou?

You see from the words, "Hence! home, you idle creatures," etc., what the mood of Flavius is. But the citizens do not take the tribune seriously, and persist in joking and punning:

*First Com.* Why, sir, a carpenter.

*Mar.* Where is thy leather apron and thy rule?  
What dost thou with thy best apparel on?  
You, sir, what trade are you?

*Sec. Com.* Truly, sir, in respect of a fine workman,  
I am but, as you would say, a cobbler.

*Mar.* But what trade art thou? answer me directly.

*Sec. Com.* A trade, sir, that, I hope, I may use with  
a safe conscience; which is, indeed, sir, a mender of  
bad soles.

*Mar.* What trade, thou knave? thou naughty knave,  
what trade?

*Sec. Com.* Nay, I beseech you, sir, be not out with  
me: yet, if you be out, sir, I can mend you.

*Mar.* What meanest thou by that? mend me, thou  
saucy fellow!

*Sec. Com.* Why, sir, cobble you.

*Flav.* Thou art a cobbler, art thou?

*Sec. Com.* Truly, sir, all that I live by is with the  
awl: I meddle with no tradesman's matters, nor women's  
matters, but with awl. I am, indeed, sir, a surgeon to  
old shoes; when they are in great danger, I recover  
them. As proper men as ever trod upon neat's leather  
have gone upon my handiwork.

*Flav.* But wherefore art not in thy shop today? Why  
dost thou lead these men about the streets?

*Sec. Com.* Truly, sir, to wear out their shoes, to get myself into more work. But, indeed, sir, we make holiday, to see Caesar and to rejoice in his triumph.

Further illustrations of this type are not necessary: they are found in connection with your study of novels and of Shakespeare.

We come now to lyric selections in which the poet speaks in his own person, or, if it is not the poet, then some character not mentioned. There is little or no narrative in this class of poetry: it is generally the intense musical expression of a single mood. In *The Sea* it is the author's joy that finds expression. When we read aloud we take the poet's place, and naturally must at least suggest the feelings which seem to be his.

Here are a few passages of a sprightly lyrical nature:

Up the airy mountain,  
Down the rushy glen,  
We daren't go a-hunting  
For fear of little men.  
Wee folk, good folk,  
Trooping all together;  
Green jacket, red cap,  
And white owl's feather!

Down along the rocky shore  
Some make their home—  
They live on crispy pancakes  
Of yellow tide-foam;  
Some in the reeds  
Of the black-mountain lake,  
With frogs for their watch-dogs,  
All night awake.

—ALLINGHAM: *The Fairies.*

It is fairy-like spirits that sing the next two lyrics:

Where the bee sucks, there suck I;  
In a cowslip's bell I lie;  
There I couch, when owls do cry:  
On the bat's back I do fly  
After summer merrily.

Merrily, merrily, shall I live now,  
Under the blossom that hangs on the bough!  
—*The Tempest*, V, i.

Over hill, over dale,  
Through bush, through brier,  
Over park, over pale,  
Through flood, through fire,  
I do wander everywhere,  
Swifter than the moon's sphere;  
And I serve the fairy queen,  
To dew her orbs upon the green,  
The cowslips tall her pensioners be.  
In their gold coats spots you see;  
Those be rubies, fairy favors,  
In those freekles live their savors.  
I must go seek some dewdrops here.  
And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.  
—*A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, II, i.

At Columbus, Miss., on Memorial Day, 1867, flowers were strewn alike upon the graves of Northern and Southern soldiers. In the spirit that dictated that beautiful tribute let the student read these stanzas:

By the flow of the inland river,  
Whence the fleets of iron have fled,  
Where the blades of the grave-grass quiver.  
Asleep are the ranks of the dead;

Under the sod and the dew,  
 Waiting the judgment day;  
 Under the one, the Blue;  
 Under the other, the Gray.

From the silence of sorrowful hours  
 The desolate mourners go,  
 Lovingly laden with flowers  
 Alike for the friend and the foe;  
 Under the sod and the dew,  
 Waiting the judgment day;  
 Under the roses, the Blue;  
 Under the lilies, the Gray.

Sadly, but not with upbraiding,  
 The generous deed was done;  
 In the storm of the years that are fading  
 No braver battle was won;  
 Under the sod and the dew,  
 Waiting the judgment day;  
 Under the blossoms, the Blue;  
 Under the garlands, the Gray.

No more shall the war-ery sever,  
 Or the winding rivers be red;  
 They banish our anger forever,  
 When they laurel the graves of our dead.  
 Under the sod and the dew,  
 Waiting the judgment day;  
 Love and tears for the Blue;  
 Tears and love for the Gray.

—FINCH: *The Blue and the Gray.*

Burly, dozing humble-bee,  
 Where thou art is clime for me.  
 Let them sail for Porto Rique,  
 Far-off heats through seas to seek;

I will follow thee alone,  
Thou animated torrid-zone!  
Zigzag steerer, desert cheerer,  
Let me chase thy waving lines;  
Keep me nearer, me thy hearer,  
Singing over shrubs and vines.

—EMERSON: *The Humble-Bee*.

In both the lyric and dramatic forms we live imaginatively the experience of a character whose emotions must be gathered solely from the text. The emotions you have thus far expressed are those of an author, as in lyrics, or the persons in a story or drama. In the following extracts the emotions to be expressed are yours: that is, it is the way *you* feel about the pictures, or the facts, or the incidents described—your connotation. You are describing something that moves you, excites you, and the emotion manifests itself in the voice.

The need of appreciating the strongly dramatic scenes before giving them vocally is self-evident, and most students, when they once become interested, do not find much difficulty in the oral rendition. A severer test of a reader (and one, by the way, the very severity of which the average person doesn't appreciate) is in the expression of narration and description; and it is in this realm that there is room for the greatest improvement. Sometimes narration and description are full of impassioned passages, and these must be treated with even more care than the scenes in dramas and novels. It is in the quieter moods that there is most need for the student to keep

his reading interesting. Animated reading is not necessarily emotional, but it may have great emotion in it, in which case the expression will manifest it. In the non-dramatic passages the reader should have in mind as he addresses his audience, "This is very interesting; I like it, you will like it; listen to it," and that will vitalize the expression.

Victor Hugo is describing the battle of Waterloo and has come to that moment when Napoleon orders General Ney and his cavalry to charge the English, who are holding a plateau in the middle of the battle-field. If you read this wonderful description carefully and make some effort to see the pictures, your imagination cannot fail to react upon your voice, which is sure to express the excitement, the awe, and the tragic grandeur you feel in the depiction of this crucial moment in the last great battle of Napoleon.

Napoleon was one of those geniuses who rule the thunder. He had found his thunderbolt. He ordered Milhaud's cuirassiers to carry the plateau of Mont Saint-Jean. They were three thousand, five hundred. They formed a line of half a mile. They were gigantic men on colossal horses. They were twenty-six squadrons, and they had behind them a strong support. Aide-de-camp Bernard brought them the Emperor's order. Ney drew his sword and placed himself at their head. The enormous squadrons began to move. Then was seen a fearful sight. All this cavalry, with sabers drawn, banners waving, and trumpets sounding, formed in column by division, descended with even movement and as one man—with the precision of a bronze battering-ram opening a breach.

Behind the crest of the plateau, under cover of the

masked battery, the English infantry formed in thirteen squares, with musket to the shoulder, and eye upon sights, waiting, calm, silent, and immovable. They could not see the cuirassiers, and the cuirassiers could not see them. They heard the increasing sound of three thousand horses, the alternate and measured striking of their hoofs at full trot, the rattling of the cuirasses, the clinking of the sabers, and a sort of fierce roar of the coming host. There was a moment of fearful silence; then, suddenly, a long line of raised arms brandishing sabers appeared above the crest, with easques, trumpets, and standards, and three thousand faces, with gray mustaches, crying, "Vive l'Empereur!"

All at once, tragic to relate, at the left of the English, and on our right, the head of the column of cuirassiers reared with a frightful clamor. Arrived at the culminating point of the crest, unmanageable, full of fury, and bent upon the extermination of the squares and cannons, the cuirassiers saw between them and the English a ditch—a grave. It was the sunken road of Ohain. It was a frightful moment. There was the ravine, unlooked for, yawning at the very feet of the horses, two fathoms deep between its double slopes. The second rank pushed in the first, the third pushed in the second; the horses reared, threw themselves over, fell upon their backs, and struggled with their feet in the air, piling up and overturning their riders; no power to retreat. The whole column was nothing but a projectile. The force acquired to crush the English crushed the French.

The inexorable ravine could not yield until it was filled; riders and horses rolled together pellmell, grinding each other, making common flesh in this dreadful gulf; and when the grave was full of living men, the rest rode over them and passed on. Almost a third of Dubois' brigade sank into this abyss. Here the loss of the battle began.—HUGO: *Les Misérables*.

He spoke, and Rustum answer'd not, but hurl'd  
His spear; down from the shoulder, down it came,  
As on some partridge in the corn a hawk,  
That long has tower'd in the airy clouds,  
Drops like a plummet; Sohrab saw it come,  
And sprang aside, quick as a flash; the spear  
Hiss'd, and went quivering down into the sand,  
Which it sent flying wide;—then Sohrab threw  
In turn, and full struck Rustum's shield; sharp rang,  
The iron plates rang sharp, but turn'd the spear.  
And Rustum seized his club, which none but he  
Could wield; . . . . . and struck  
One stroke; but again Sohrab sprang aside,  
Lithe as the glancing snake, and the club came  
Thundering to earth, and leapt from Rustum's hand.  
And Rustum follow'd his own blow, and fell  
To his knees, and with his fingers clutch'd the sand.

—ARNOLD: *Sohrab and Rustum.*

Away then they dashed, through thick and thin,  
stones flying and sparks flashing at every bound. An  
opening in the trees now cheered him with the hopes  
that the church bridge was at hand. The wavering  
reflection of a silver star in the bosom of the brook told  
him that he was not mistaken. "If I can but reach that  
bridge," thought Ichabod, "I am safe." Just then he  
heard the black steed panting and blowing close behind  
him; he even fancied that he felt his hot breath. An-  
other convulsive kick in the ribs, and old Gunpowder  
sprang upon the bridge; he thundered over the re-  
sounding planks; he gained the opposite side; and now  
Ichabod cast a look behind to see if his pursuer should  
vanish, according to rule, in a flash of fire and brim-  
stone. Just then he saw the goblin rising in his stirrups,  
and in the very act of hurling his head at him. Ichabod  
endeavored to dodge the horrible missile, but too late.  
It encountered his cranium with a tremendous crash.

He was tumbled headlong into the dust, and Gunpowder, the black steed, and the goblin rider passed by like a whirlwind.—IRVING: *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*.

In the bright October morning Savoy's duke had left his bride.

From the castle, past the drawbridge, flow'd the hunters' merry tide.

Steeds are neighing, gallants glittering, gay her smiling lord to greet,

From her mullion'd chamber-easement smiles the Duchess Marguerite.

From Vienna, by the Danube, here she came, a bride, in spring,

Now the autumn crisps the forest; hunters gather, bugles ring.

Hounds are pulling, prickers swearing, horses fret, and boar-spears glance.

Off,—they sweep the marshy forests, westward on the side of France.

Hark! the game's on foot; they scatter,—down the forest-ridings lone,

Furious, single horsemen gallop. Hark! a shout,—a crash,—a groan.

Pale and breathless came the hunters—on the turf dead lies the boar.

Ah! the duke lies stretched beside him senseless, writhing in his gore.

In the dull October evening, down the leaf-strewn forest-road,

To the castle, past the drawbridge, came the hunters with their load.

In the hall, with scouces blazing, ladies waiting round her seat,

Clothed in smiles, beneath the dais sat the Duchess Marguerite.

Hark! below the gates unbarring, tramp of men, and  
quick commands.

“ “Tis my lord come back from hunting,”—and the  
duchess claps her hands.

Slow and tired came the hunters; stopp'd in darkness in  
the court.

“ Ho! this way, ye laggard hunters. To the hall. What  
sport! what sport!”

Slow they entered with their master; in the hall they  
laid him down.

On his coat were leaves and blood-stains, on his brow an  
angry frown.

Dead her princely youthful husband lay before his youth-  
ful wife,

Bloody 'neath the flaring sconces: and the sight froze  
all her life.

In Vienna, by the Danube, kings hold revel, gallants  
meet.

Gay of old amid the gayest was the Duchess Mar-  
guerite.

In Vienna, by the Danube, feast and dance her youth  
beguiled:

Till that hour she never sorrow'd, but from then she  
never smiled.

—ARNOLD: *The Church of Brou.*

#### REVIEW EXERCISES

There is need for less illustrative matter in this chapter than in most of the others. Virtually all of the passages in the book are in varying degrees emotional: the plays you are studying have much material, and finally, if further practice is needed, it can easily be got from the poems and novels in your course in literature. To serve, however, as models,

some review exercises are given illustrating a variety of emotions, and several extracts in which the author directly or indirectly suggests the emotion.

It is not enough to know that literature is primarily an appeal to the emotions through the imagination; that the purpose of literature is to arouse emotion in the reader; that an author frequently describes with great exactitude and detail the feelings of his characters. *One must himself, in kind at least, if not in fullest degree, experience imaginatively the same emotions or fail in whole or in part to receive from the author all that he has to give us.* It is of no avail to deny this, for only those who can and do enter sympathetically into the mood of the author or the character can pass judgment in the matter. One never fully appreciates the greatness in character delineation of any author, his insight into the mind and feelings of his creations, until in some degree he lives imaginatively in those characters. Nor is it sufficient to acquiesce in the truth of this statement. If you would develop your appreciation of the dramatic, narrative, descriptive, and lyrical elements of literature, make it a habit to read aloud daily such passages as we have been studying. And for those who have had and can get no vocal training, let it be an encouragement to know that such reading as I have been urging is of more value than a whole course of mechanical drills. The illustrations that follow are as good as any on which to begin.

The first passage, taken from Ruskin's *King of the Golden River*, illustrates almost every phase of the

emotional problem. I am sure, in the light of what we have learned, it will prove a valuable study, even if we have had this charming story in the grades.

“Hollo!” said the little gentleman, “that’s not the way to answer the door. I’m wet, let me in.”

To do the little gentleman justice, he was wet. From the ends of his mustaches the water was running into his waistcoat-pockets, and out again like a mill-stream.

“I beg pardon, sir,” said Gluck, “I’m very sorry, but I really can’t.”

“Can’t what?” said the old gentleman.

“I can’t let you in, sir,—I can’t indeed; my brothers would beat me to death, sir, if I thought of such a thing. What do you want, sir?”

“Want?” said the old gentleman, petulantly. “I want fire and shelter. Let me in, I say; I only want to warm myself.”

“He does look very wet,” said little Gluck; “I’ll just let him in for a quarter of an hour.”

Then the old gentleman walked into the kitchen, and sat himself down on the hob.

“You’ll soon dry there, sir,” said Gluck, and sat down again to turn the mutton. But the old gentleman did *not* dry there, but went on drip, drip, dripping among the cinders, and the fire fizzed and sputtered, and began to look very black and uncomfortable; never was such a cloak; every fold in it ran like a gutter.

“I beg pardon, sir,” said Gluck; “mayn’t I take your cloak?”

“No, thank you,” said the old gentleman.

“Your cap, sir?”

“I’m all right, thank you,” said the old gentleman, gruffly.

“But—sir—I’m very sorry,” said Gluck, hesitatingly; “but—really, sir—you’re putting the fire out.”

"It'll take longer to do the mutton then," replied the visitor, dryly. "Can't you give me a little bit?"

"Impossible, sir," said Gluck.

"I'm very hungry; I've had nothing to eat yesterday, nor today."

He spoke in so very melancholy a tone that it quite melted Gluck's heart. "They promised me one slice today, sir," said he; "I can give you that, but not a bit more."

"That's a good boy," said the old gentleman again.

Then Gluck sharpened a knife. "I don't care if I do get beaten for it," thought he. Just as he had cut a large slice out of the mutton, there came a tremendous rap at the door. Gluck ran to open it.

"What did you keep us waiting in the rain for?" said Schwartz, as he walked in, throwing his umbrella in Gluck's face.

"Ay! what for, indeed, you little vagabond?" said Hans, administering an educational box on the ear, as he followed his brother into the kitchen.

"Bless my soul!" said Schwartz, when he opened the door.

"Amen," said the little gentleman, who had taken his cap off and was bowing with the utmost possible velocity.

"Who's that?" said Schwartz, catching up a rolling-pin, and turning to Gluck with a fierce frown.

"I don't know, indeed, brother," said Gluck, in great terror.

"How did he get in?" roared Schwartz.

"My dear brother," said Gluck, deprecatingly. "he was so very wet!"

"Who are you, sir?" demanded Schwartz, turning upon the stranger.

"What's your business?" snarled Hans.

"I'm a poor old man, sir," the little gentleman began

very modestly, "and I saw your fire through the window, and begged shelter for a quarter of an hour."

"Have the goodness to walk out again, then," said Schwartz. "We've quite enough water in our kitchen, without making it a drying-house."

"It is a cold day to turn an old man out in, sir; look at my gray hairs."

"Ay!" said Hans, "there are enough of them to keep you warm. Walk!"

"I'm very, very hungry, sir; couldn't you spare me a bit of bread before I go?"

"Bread, indeed!" said Schwartz; "do you suppose we've nothing to do with our bread but to give it to such red-nosed fellows as you?"

"Why don't you sell your feather?" said Hans, sneeringly. "Out with you."

"A little bit," said the old gentleman.

"Be off!" said Schwartz.

"Pray, gentlemen."

"Off, and be hanged!" cried Hans, seizing him by the collar.—RUSKIN: *The King of the Golden River*.

Of course the emotion can, in most of the cases we have had, be gathered from the words of the speakers; but always remember that the author sometimes suggests emotion by describing the tone of voice (harshly, shrilly, tenderly); sometimes by describing the facial expression, the attitude, or some significant gesture of the body; and finally, there are many cases in which he combines several methods, as in the next excerpts.

Longfellow's *King Robert of Sicily* has a number of passages which illuminate our theme. The king is

very proud and boastful. He hears the monks at vespers chanting the Magnificat:

*"He has put down the mighty from their seat,  
And has exalted them of low degree."*

Thereat King Robert muttered scornfully,  
" 'Tis well that such seditious words are sung  
Only by priests and in the Latin tongue;  
For unto priests and people be it known,  
There is no power can push me from my throne!"  
And leaning back, he yawned and fell asleep,  
Lulled by the chant monotonous and deep.

When he awakes he finds himself alone at night, locked within the church. The sexton comes, asking "Who is there?"

Half choked with rage, King Robert fiercely said,  
"Open: 'tis I the King! Art thou afraid?"

Robert finally comes to his own palace and sees upon the throne an angel who in every way resembles himself. Robert, not knowing it is an angel, believes the stranger to be an impostor; and then the poem goes on:

A moment speechless, motionless, amazed,  
The throneless monarch on the Angel gazed.  
Who met his look of anger and surprise  
With the divine compassion of his eyes;  
Then said, "Who art thou? and why com'st thou  
here?"  
To which King Robert answered, with a sneer,  
"I am the King, and come to claim my own  
From an impostor, who usurps my throne!"  
And suddenly, at these audacious words,

Up sprang the angry guests, and drew their swords ;  
The Angel answered, with unruffled brow,  
"Nay, not the King, but the King's Jester ; thou  
Henceforth shall wear the bells and scalloped cape,  
And for thy counselor shalt lead an ape ;  
Thou shalt obey my servants when they call,  
And wait upon my henchmen in the hall !"

We have had no passage quite like this before. Observe "the divine compassion of his eyes" and enter imaginatively into the spirit of those words as you question Robert. A similar bit of suggestive description is in the phrase "with unruffled brow." You see our tendency would be to address Robert in tones of anger and scorn. But note how much more imagination there is in Longfellow's conception of the Angel's attitude toward King Robert.

The king is now a court jester, but his pride not in the least subdued. As you read the next excerpt do not overlook the suggestion in the last two lines :

And when the angel met him on his way,  
And half in earnest, half in jest, would say,  
Sternly, though tenderly, that he might feel  
The velvet scabbard held a sword of steel,  
"Art thou the King?" the passion of his woe  
Burst from him in resistless overflow,  
And, lifting high his forehead, he would fling  
The haughty answer back, "I am, I am the King!"

At last, after three years in this ignominious position, Robert repents and accepts his punishment as the just penalty of his sin. He is alone within his palace, and the Angel asks him again the question to

which up to this time Robert had invariably answered with stubborn pride:

And when they were alone, the Angel said,  
"Art thou the King?" Then, bowing down his head,  
King Robert crossed both hands upon his breast,  
And meekly answered him: "Thou knowest best!  
My sins as scarlet are; let me go hence,  
And in some cloister's school of penitence,  
Across those stones that pave the way to heaven,  
Walk barefoot till my guilty soul be shriven."

In all there have not been more than fifteen or twenty words describing King Robert's and the Angel's feelings, and yet how much these few phrases have revealed!

Tom followed Maggie up stairs into her mother's room, and saw her go at once to a drawer, from which she took out a large pair of scissors.

"What are they for, Maggie?" said Tom, feeling his curiosity awakened.

Maggie answered by seizing her front locks and cutting them straight across the middle of her forehead.

"Oh, my buttons, Maggie, you'll catch it!" exclaimed Tom; "you'd better not cut any more off."

Snip! went the great scissors again.

"Here, Tom, cut it behind for me," said Maggie, excited by her own daring, and anxious to finish the deed.

"You'll catch it, you know," said Tom, nodding his head in an admonitory manner, and hesitating a little as he took the scissors.

"Never mind—make haste!" said Maggie, giving a little stamp with her foot. Her cheeks were quite flushed.

One delicious grinding snip, and then another and another, and Maggie stood cropped in a jagged, uneven

manner, but with a sense of clearness and freedom, as if she had emerged from a wood into the open plain.

"Oh, Maggie," said Tom, jumping around her, and slapping his knees as he laughed. "Oh, my buttons, what a queer thing you look! Look at yourself in the glass: you look like the idiot we throw our nutshells to at school."

. . . . .

"Heyday! what little gell's this—why, I don't know her. Is it some little gell you've picked up in the road, Kezia?"

"Why, she's gone and cut her hair herself," said Mr. Tulliver in an undertone to Mr. Deane, laughing with much enjoyment.

"Fie, for shame!" said Aunt Glegg, in her loudest, severest tone of reproof. "Little gells as cut their own hair should be whipped and fed on bread and water."

"Ay, ay," said Uncle Glegg, meaning to give a playful turn to this denunciation, "she must be sent to jail, I think."

"She's more like a gipsy nor ever," said Aunt Pullet, in a pitying tone; "it's very bad luck, sister, as the gell should be so brown. I doubt it'll stand in her way i' life to be so brown."

"She's a naughty child, as'll break her mother's heart," said Mrs. Tulliver, with the tears in her eyes.—ELIOT: *The Mill on the Floss*.

It is Cardinal Wolsey, after his fall from power, who speaks in the following passage from *King Henry VIII*:

Farewell! a long farewell, to all my greatness!  
This is the state of man: to-day he puts forth  
The tender leaves of hope; to-morrow blossoms,  
And bears his blushing honours thick upon him;

The third day comes a frost, a killing frost,  
And, when he thinks, good easy man, full surely  
His greatness is a-ripening, nips his root,  
And then he falls, as I do. I have ventured,  
Like little wanton boys that swim on bladders,  
This many summers in a sea of glory,  
But far beyond my depth: my high-blown pride  
At length broke under me and now has left me,  
Weary and old with service, to the mercy  
Of a rude stream, that must for ever hide me.  
Vain pomp and glory of this world, I hate ye:  
I feel my heart new open'd. O, how wretched  
Is that poor man that hangs on princes' favours!  
There is, betwixt that smile we would aspire to,  
That sweet aspect of princes, and their ruin,  
More pangs and fears than wars or women have:  
And when he falls, he falls like Lucifer,  
Never to hope again.

Many years after the scene we have already studied from *The Mill on the Floss*, Tom has a quarrel with Maggie's lover:

"Do you call this acting the part of a man, sir?" Tom said, in a voice of harsh scorn.

"What do you mean?" answered Philip, haughtily.

"Mean? Stand farther from me, lest I should lay hands on you, and I'll tell you what I mean. I mean, taking advantage of a young girl's foolishness and ignorance to get her to have secret meetings with you. I mean, daring to trifle with the respectability of a family that has a good and honest name to support."

"I deny that," interrupted Philip, impetuously. "I could never trifle with anything that affected your sister's happiness. She is dearer to me than she is to you; I honor her more than you can ever honor her; I would give up my life to her."

"Don't talk high-flown nonsense to me, sir! Do you mean to pretend that you didn't know it would be injurious to her to meet you here week after week? Do you pretend you had any right to make professions of love to her, even if you had been a fit husband for her, when neither her father nor your father would ever consent to a marriage between you? And *you*—*you* to try and worm yourself into the affections of a handsome girl who is not eighteen, and has been shut out from the world by her father's misfortunes! That's your crooked notion of honor, is it? I call it base treachery."

"It is manly of you to talk in this way to *me*," said Philip, bitterly, his whole frame shaken by violent emotions. "You are incapable of even understanding what I feel for your sister."

"I should be very sorry to understand your feelings. If you dare to come near her again, or to write to her, your puny, miserable body shall not protect you. I'll thrash you—I'll hold you up to public scorn. Who wouldn't laugh at the idea of *your* turning lover to a fine girl?"

"Tom, I will not bear it," Maggie burst out, in a convulsed voice. "It was for my father's sake, Philip," continued Maggie, imploringly. "Tom threatens to tell my father—and he couldn't bear it now: I have promised that we will not have any intercourse without my brother's knowledge."

"And I'll save her from throwing herself away on you. Come away, Maggie." And seizing Maggie's wrist they walked away in silence.

We have seen old Scrooge annoyed by his cheery nephew who came to him on Christmas Eve; but he is converted through a dream that reveals him to himself in all his miserable selfishness. Let your expres-

sion show the change in him as it manifests itself in the following lines:

"I don't know what to do!" cried Scrooge, laughing and crying in the same breath, and making a perfect Laocoön of himself with his stockings. "I am as light as a feather, I am as happy as an angel, I am as merry as a schoolboy, I am as giddy as a drunken man. A merry Christmas to everybody! A happy New Year to all the world! Hallo here! Whoop! Hallo!" . . . . "I don't know what day of the month it is. I don't know how long I have been among the Spirits. I don't know anything. I'm quite a baby. Never mind. I don't care. I'd rather be a baby. Hallo! Whoop! Hallo here!"

Running to the window, he opened it, and put out his head. No fog, no mist; clear, bright, jovial, stirring, cold; cold, piping for the blood to dance to; golden sunlight; heavenly sky; sweet, fresh air; merry bells. Oh, glorious, glorious! Glorious!—DICKENS: *A Christmas Carol*.

*Macduff.* O horror, horror, horror! Tongue nor heart

Cannot conceive nor name thee!

*Macbeth.* What's the matter?

*Macduff.* Confusion now hath made his masterpiece! Most sacrilegious murder hath broke ope The Lord's anointed temple, and stole thence The life o' the building!

*Macbeth.* What is 't you say? the life?

*Lennox.* Mean you his majesty?

*Macduff.* Approach the chamber, and destroy your sight

With a new Gorgon: do not bid me speak;  
See, and then speak yourselves.

[*Exeunt Macbeth and Lennox.*

Awake, awake!  
 Ring the alarum-bell. Murder and treason!  
 Banquo and Donalbain! Malcolm! awake!  
 Shake off this downy sleep, death's counterfeit,  
 And look on death itself! up, up, and see  
 The great doom's image! Malcolm! Banquo!  
 As from your graves rise up, and walk like sprites,  
 To countenance this horror! Ring the bell.

—*Macbeth*, II, iii.

The following poems will afford practice in the reading of verse in which the emotion and sentiment are well within the experience of the average student.

A clever, bright, animated bit of fun is the following poem by an American poet:

#### EARLY RISING

JOHN G. SAXE

“Now blessing light on him that first invented sleep! it covers a man all over, thoughts and all, like a cloak; it is meat for the hungry, drink for the thirsty, heat for the cold, and cold for the hot.”—CERVANTES: *Don Quixote*.

“God bless the man who first invented sleep!”

So Sancho Panza said, and so say I;  
 And bless him, also, that he didn't keep  
 His great discovery to himself, nor try  
 To make it—as the lucky fellow might—  
 A close monopoly by patent-right!

Yes—bless the man who first invented sleep  
 (I really can't avoid the iteration);  
 But blast the man with curses loud and deep,  
 Whate'er the rascal's name, or age, or station,  
 Who first invented, and went round advising,  
 That artificial cut-off—Early Rising!

"Rise with the lark, and with the lark to bed,"  
Observes some solemn, sentimental owl;  
Maxims like these are very cheaply said;  
But, ere you make yourself a fool or fowl,  
Pray, just inquire about his rise and fall,  
And whether larks have any beds at all!

The time for honest folks to be abed  
Is in the morning, if I reason right;  
And he who cannot keep his precious head  
Upon his pillow till it's fairly light,  
And so enjoy his forty morning winks,  
Is up to knavery, or else—he drinks!

Thomson, who sang about the "Seasons," said  
It was a glorious thing to rise in season;  
But then he said it—lying—in his bed,  
At 10 A. M.—the very reason  
He wrote so charmingly. The simple fact is,  
His preaching wasn't sanctioned by his practice.

'Tis, doubtless, well to be sometimes awake—  
Awake to duty, and awake to truth—  
But when, alas! a nice review we take  
Of our best deeds and days, we find, in sooth,  
The hours that leave the slightest cause to weep  
Are those we passed in childhood or asleep!

'Tis beautiful to leave the world awhile  
For the soft visions of the gentle night;  
And free, at last, from mortal care or guile,  
To live as only in the angels' sight,  
In sleep's sweet realm so easily shut in,  
Where, at the worst, we only *dream* of sin!

So let us sleep, and give the Maker praise.  
I like the lad who, when his father thought  
To clip his morning nap by hackneyed phrase  
Of vagrant worm by early songster caught,  
Cried, "Served him right! 'tis not at all surprising;  
The worm was punished, sir, for early rising."

## ALEXANDER BREAKING BUCEPHALUS

GEORGE LANSING TAYLOR

Philonicus, the Thessalian, brought to Philip's court a  
steed  
Tall and shapely, powerful, glorious, of Larissa's noblest  
breed;  
Flashing white from mane to fetlock, neck of thunder,  
eyes of flame  
In his brow, the jet-black ox-head, whence Bucephalus,  
his name.

But the mighty charger's spirit none could manage,  
soothe, subdue,  
Groom Thessalian, Macedonian, right and left alike he  
threw;  
Vain were curb-bits, vain caresses, to assuage those  
tameless fires,  
Blazing in arterial lava from a hundred Centaur sires.

"Faugh! avaunt, the furious monster," Philip cried in  
vexed disgust,  
"What a brute to send a monarch! would they see me  
flung to dust?  
Nay! Begone with such a fury! there's no dragon  
market here!"  
At the word young Alexander heaved a sigh and dropped  
a tear.

"What a matchless steed they're losing!" cried the boy  
in proud distress,  
"All for lack of nerve to back him, lack of boldness and  
address!  
Lack of soul to show the master to the dumb but knowing  
thing!  
Lack of kingliness to match the proud four-footed king!"

"What! rash youth! arraign thy elders? Durst thou mount the horse to-day?

Shouldst thou fail, what kingly forfeit for thy folly canst thou pay?"

Stern spake Philip. Alexander: "Yea, I dare, give but the sign,

I will ride; or thirteen talents pay thee, and the steed be mine."

"Done!" cried Philip. "Mount!" The courtiers, laughing, jeered the challenged boy;

But, ablaze with inspiration, to the steed he sprang with joy;

Boldly seized the foamsprent bridle, turned the fiercee eye to the sun,

Spake firm words of fearless kindness, till the fiery heart was won.

To his back then lightly springing, on his neck he flung the rein,

Gave him voice and spur, and sent him free and bounding o'er the plain.

Like a thunderbolt in harness the great steed exultant flew,

Glorying in his new-found master, with brute instinct swift and true.

On gazed Philip, on gazed courtiers, on gazed Philla's anxious throng,

Wondering at the princely hand that tamed a steed so fiercee and strong,

All unconseious of that strange instinct which could manliness explore,

And a kingly lord aeccepting, spurned all others evermore.

On, around the royal stadium still the courser storms  
the ground,  
All his mighty thews rejoicing as his rhythmic hoof-  
beats sound !  
Firm, erect, the eager rider with joy of conquest  
thrills ;  
Horse and man, a new-born Centaur, one inspiring  
spirit fills.

Down the home-stretch now careering, steed and rider  
greet the king,  
Jeers are changed to acclamation, shouts of rapture  
roll and ring.  
But with prescient tears the father hails the triumph  
won !  
“Macedonia cramps thy genius, seek a grander realm,  
my son.”

Thus the matchless steed was mastered, born to bear  
through steel and flame  
Earth’s world-conquering hero, joined with him in  
victory and fame,  
Till beside the far Hydaspes, worn with years, the  
war-horse dies,  
And a city, his memorial, lifts its towers to India’s  
skies.

Our closing selections are chosen from some of the world's greatest speakers, and will afford the student excellent practice in the delivery of straightforward, impassioned oratory:

#### A REMINISCENCE OF LEXINGTON

THEODORE PARKER

One raw morning in spring—it will be eighty years the 19th day of this month—Hancock and Adams, the Moses and Aaron of that Great Deliverance, were both at Lexington; they also had “obstructed an officer” with brave words. British soldiers, a thousand strong, came to seize them and carry them over sea for trial, and so nip the bud of Freedom auspiciously opening in that early spring. The town militia came together before daylight, “for training.” A great, tall man, with a large head and a high, wide brow, their captain—one who had “seen service”—marshalled them into line, numbering but seventy, and bade “every man load his piece with powder and ball. I will order the first man shot that runs away,” said he, when some faltered. “Don't fire unless fired upon, but if they want to have a war, let it begin here.”

Gentlemen, you know what followed; those farmers and mechanics “fired the shot heard round the world.” A little monument covers the bones of such as before had pledged their fortune and their sacred honor to the Freedom of America, and that day gave it also their lives. I was born in that little town, and bred up amid the memories of that day. When a boy, my mother lifted me up, one Sunday, in her religious, patriotic arms, and held me while I read the first monumental line I ever saw—“Sacred to Liberty and the Rights of Mankind.”

Since then I have studied the memorial marbles of Greece and Rome, in many an ancient town; nay, on

Egyptian obelisks, have read what was written before the Eternal roused up Moses to lead Israel out of Egypt, but no chiseled stone has ever stirred me to such emotion as these rustic names of men who fell "In the Sacred Cause of God and their Country."

Gentlemen, the Spirit of Liberty, the Love of Justice, was early fanned into a flame in my boyish heart. That monument covers the bones of my own kinsfolk; it was their blood which reddened the long, green grass at Lexington. It was my own name which stands chiseled on that stone; the tall Captain who marshalled his fellow farmers and mechanics in stern array, and spoke such brave and dangerous words as opened the war of American Independence—the last to leave the field—was my father's father. I learned to read out of his Bible, and with a musket he that day captured from the foe, I learned also another religious lesson, that "Rebellion to Tyrants is Obedience to God." I keep them both "Sacred to Liberty and the Rights of Mankind," to use them both "In the Sacred Cause of God and my Country."

#### PLEA FOR THE OLD SOUTH CHURCH, BOSTON

WENDELL PHILLIPS

*Boston, June 4, 1876*

A hundred years ago our fathers announced this sublime declaration, "God intended all men to be free and equal." Today, with a territory that joins ocean to ocean, with her millions of people, with two wars behind her, with the sublime achievement of having grappled with the fearful disease that threatened her life, and broken four millions of fetters, the great Republic launches into the second century of her existence.

With how much pride, with what a thrill, with what tender and loyal reverence, may we not cherish the spot

where this marvelous enterprise began, the roof under which its first counsels were held, where the air still trembles and burns with Otis and Sam Adams. Except the Holy City, is there any more memorable or sacred place, on the face of the earth, than the cradle of such a change? Athens has her Aeropolis, but the Greek can point to no such results. London has her Palace, and her Tower, and her St. Stephen's Chapel, but the human race owes her no such memories. France has spots marked by the sublimest devotion, but the Mecca of the man who believes and hopes for the human race is not to Paris, it is to the seaboard cities of the great Republic. And when the flag was assailed, and the regiments marched through the streets, what walls did they salute as the regimental flags floated by to Gettysburg and Antietam? These! Our boys carried down to the battle-fields the memory of State Street, of Faneuil Hall, of the old South Church.

We had signal prominence in those early days. It was on the men of Boston that Lord North visited his revenge. It was our port that was to be shut and its commerce annihilated. It was Sam Adams and John Hancock who enjoyed the everlasting reward of being the only names excepted from the royal proclamation of forgiveness. Here, Sam Adams, the ablest and ripest statesman God gave to the epoch, forecast those measures which welded thirteen colonies into one thunderbolt, and launched it at George the Third. Here, Otis magnetized every boy into a desperate rebel.

The saving of this landmark is the best monument you can erect to the men of the Revolution. You spend thousands of dollars to put up a statue of some old hero. You want your sons to gaze upon the nearest approach to the features of those "dead but sceptred sovereigns who still rule our spirits from their urns." But what is a statue of Cicero, compared to standing where your voice echoes from pillar and wall that actually heard his phil-

ippies? Scholars have grown old and blind, striving to put their hands on the very spot where bold men spoke or brave men died. Shall we tear in pieces the roof that actually trembled to the words that made us a nation? It is impossible not to believe that the spirits above us are permitted to know what passes in this terrestrial sphere, that Adams, and Warren, and Otis are today bending over us asking that the scene of their immortal labors shall not be desecrated, or blotted from the sight of men.

Consecrate it again to the memory and worship of a grateful people! Napoleon turned aside his Simplon road to save a tree Cæsar had once mentioned. Won't you turn a street, or spare a quarter of an acre, to remind boys what sort of men their fathers were? Think twice before you touch these walls. We are the world's trustees. The Old South no more belongs to us, than Luther's or Hampden's or Brutus' name does to Germany, England, or Rome. Each and all are held in trust as torchlight guides and inspiration for any man struggling for justice and ready to die for truth. The worship of great memories, noble deeds, sacred places, is one of the keenest ripeners of such elements. Seize greedily on every chance to save and emphasize them.

#### AGAINST CURTAILING THE RIGHT OF SUFFRAGE

VICTOR HUGO

*Paris, May 20, 1850*

Gentlemen—I address the men who govern us and say to them: Go on, cut off three millions of voters; cut off eight out of nine, and the result will be the same to you, if it be not more decisive. What you do not cut off is your own faults; the absurdities of your policy of compression, your fatal incapacity, your ignorance of the present

epoch, the antipathy you feel for it, and that it feels for you; what you will not cut off is the times which are advancing, the hour now striking, the ascending movement of ideas, the gulf opening broader and deeper between yourself and the age, between the young generation and you, between the spirit of liberty and you, between the spirit of philosophy and you.

What you will not cut off is this immense fact, that the nation goes to one side, while you go to the other; that what for you is the sunrise is for it the sun's setting; that you turn your backs to the future, while this great people of France, its front all radiant with light from the rising dawn of a new humanity, turns its back to the past.

Gentleman, this law is invalid; it is null; it is dead even before it exists. And do you know what has killed it? It is that, when it meanly approaches to steal the vote from the poeket of the poor and feeble, it meets the keen, terrible eye of the national probity, a devouring light, in which the work of darkness disappears.

Yes, men who govern us, at the bottom of every citizen's conscience, the most obscure as well as the greatest, at the very depths of the soul (I use your own expression) of the last beggar, the last vagabond, there is a sentiment, sublime, sacred, insurmountable, indestructible, eternal—the sentiment of right! This sentiment, which is the every essence of the human conscience, which the Scriptures call the corner-stone of justice, is the rock on which iniquities, hypoerisies, bad laws, evil designs, bad governments, fall, and are shipwrecked. This is the hidden, irresistible obstacle, veiled in the recesses of every mind, but ever present, ever active, on which you will always exhaust yourselves; and which, whatever you do, you will never destroy. I warn you, your labor is lost; you will not extinguish it, you will not confuse it. Far easier to drag the rock from the bottom of the sea, than the sentiment of right from the heart of the people!

## PAUL REVERE'S RIDE

GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS

*Concord, Mass., April 19, 1875*

The first imposing armed movement against the colonies, on the 19th of April, 1775, did not take the people by surprise. For ten years they had seen the possibility, for five years the probability, and for at least a year the certainty of the contest. They quietly organized, watched and waited. As the spring advanced, it was plain that some movement would be made. On Tuesday, the 18th, Gage, the British commander, who had decided to send a force to Concord to destroy the stores, picketed the roads from Boston into Middlesex to prevent any report of the intended march from spreading into the country. But the very air was electric. In the tension of the popular mind every sight and sound was significant.

It was part of Gage's plan to seize Hancock and Adams, who were at Lexington; and on the evening of the 18th, the Committee of Safety at Cambridge sent them word to beware, for suspicious officers were abroad. In the afternoon one of the governor's grooms strolled into a stable where John Ballard was cleaning a horse. John Ballard was a Son of Liberty, and when the groom idly hinted at what might take place next morning, John's heart leaped and his hand shook; and, asking the groom to finish cleaning the horse, he ran to a friend, who carried the news straight to Paul Revere, who told him he had already heard it from two other persons.

That evening, at ten o'clock, eight hundred British troops, under Lieutenant-Colonel Smith, took boat at the foot of the Common and crossed to the Cambridge shore. Gage thought his secret had been kept, but Lord Percy, who had heard the people say on the Common that the troops would miss their aim, undeceived him. Gage instantly ordered that no one should leave the town. But

as the troops crossed the river, Ebenezer Dorr, with a message to Hancock and Adams, was riding over the Neck to Roxbury, and Paul Revere was rowing over the river to Charlestown, having agreed with his friend, Robert Newman, to show lanterns from the belfry of the Old North Church—"One if by land, and two if by sea"—as a signal of the march of the British.

Already the moon was rising, and while the troops were stealthily landing at Lechmere Point, their secret was flashing out into the April night; and Paul Revere, springing into the saddle, upon the Charlestown shore, spurred away into Middlesex. "How far that little candle throws its beams!" The modest spire yet stands, revered relic of the old town of Boston, of those brave men and of their deeds. Startling the land that night with the warning of danger, let it remind the land forever of the patriotism with which that danger was averted, and for our children, as for our fathers, still stand secure, the Pharos of American liberty.

It was a brilliant night. The winter had been unusually mild, and the spring very forward. The hills were already green. The early grain waved in the fields, and the air was sweet with the blossoming orchards. Already the robins whistled, the bluebirds sang, and the benediction of peace rested upon the landscape. Under the cloudless moon the soldiers silently marched, and Paul Revere swiftly rode, galloping through Medford and West Cambridge, rousing every house as he went spurring for Lexington and Hancock and Adams, and evading the British patrols who had been sent out to stop the news.

Stop the news! Already the village churches were beginning to ring the alarm, as the pulpits beneath them had been ringing for many a year. In the awakening houses lights flashed from window to window. Drums beat faintly far away and on every side. Signal-guns flashed and echoed. The watch-dogs barked, the cocks

crew. Stop the news!—Stop the sunrise! The murmuring night trembled with the summons so earnestly expected, so dreaded, so desired. And as long ago the voice rang out at midnight along the Syrian shore wailing that great Pan was dead, but in the same moment the choiring angels whispered—"Glory to God in the highest, for Christ is born!" so, if the stern alarm of that April night seemed to many a wistful and loyal heart to portend the passing glory of the British dominion and the tragical change of war, it whispered to them with prophetic inspiration—"Good will to men, America is born!"

## **SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS**



## CHAPTER XVI

### SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS

Any means of getting a student to read the printed page intentively is sound pedagogy. Hence the numerous problems presented in this book.

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The *text* frequently calls upon the student to read or study a passage, or to decide a question. There is a very definite task thus set before him which the teacher must insist shall be performed. *All illustrative material must be read aloud.*

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*It is not of so much moment that the student's interpretation agree with mine or with the teacher's, as that he have an interpretation which he can defend.*

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Lessons should be carefully assigned, and the class held rigidly responsible for the working out of the *particular* problem in *all illustrations*. Students should be given to understand that *all* illustrations are to be read aloud in preparation for class, even though they be not called upon to read them all aloud.

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Slipshod interpretation must not be for a moment tolerated. Every recitation helps to form habits, good or bad. Drill, constant drill on interesting material, is

indispensable for the formation of the habits necessary to proper interpretation and vocal expression.

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Assignments must not be too long, especially in the earlier parts of new chapters, but the work must be done *accurately*. Most students do not regard reading seriously, as they do, for instance, their mathematics. The reading, composition, and literature lessons are nearly always studied after preparation has been made in those subjects to which students know they can be held to strict accountability. Let the teacher, therefore, once it is certain that the student understands a given principle, hold him as rigidly responsible for careful preparation as he is held in his other subjects. This is the only cure for slipshod reading. We frequently hear the excuse, "I had so much work to do in chemistry, or shop, or civics, that I hadn't time to prepare my reading or my literature." I suggest that when we once appreciate the value of sound training in reading, we may be able to reverse the student's excuse; for if there is one lesson more than another that cannot be skimped or hurried it is the reading.

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The results of the method are cumulative. Teachers must not permit their classes as they proceed from chapter to chapter to forget any principle that has gone before.

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It is not absolutely necessary that teachers take up the chapters *seriatim*, except in so far as one may be

dependent on the other. For instance, one must begin with chapter one, and two naturally follows: but one could with perfect propriety follow with Denotation or Punctuation. A little experience with the book will help the teacher to decide. Some work in the chapter on Punctuation should be given early in the course.

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Although emotion is not discussed until the close of the book, it does not follow that it should be ignored or repressed in the earlier stages. On the contrary, it should be, within reasonable limits, encouraged from the outset.

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Drill on the exercises under Group Motive will break up the almost universal habit of letting the voice fall at the end of every phrase; and, furthermore, it will stimulate the reader to a vital, varied melody, the very opposite of that deadly monotony that pervades the reading in most of our schools. Therefore, great stress should be laid on the vocal expression of the exercises dealing with all aspects of Motive.

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Most books on reading contain extended excerpts from literature far beyond the grasp of the average student (who is not enthusiastic over Milton or Keats or Shelley). I have, therefore, while selecting material from the best literature, avoided what I deemed beyond the experience of the majority of students, believing that to force them to study what does not interest them is sure to create a distaste for it; and, relying on

years of experience, I believe further that if they come to enjoy what I have chosen they will eventually come to enjoy what now is far beyond them.

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In the great majority of cases absence of context will not stand in the student's way of using an excerpt in connection with the principle it is intended to exemplify. Where context is necessary, I have supplied it or given it in the form of a paraphrase.

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The lack of complete selections is explained by my wish to give a maximum of illustrative material for class use, and furthermore by the fact that the high-school course in English contains the best possible material for the expression lesson.

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To use the book in class even once a week will be very helpful; but the best result will be obtained from more concentrated study—daily if possible. The more quickly the student understands and applies the principles herein set forth the sooner will he come to enjoy his work in literature and *the greater will be his progress in other subjects in which textbooks play a large part.*

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To understand the principles of this method, nay, to be able to pass a hundred per cent examination in them, is not very difficult. Understanding of theory by a great way precedes the power to apply it. Hence, the teacher must not be discouraged if a student shows

a fairly firm grasp of the principles without at once manifesting great improvement in vocal expression—at least the kind of expression that wins prizes and displays itself at school exercises. The first improvement will be seen in a heightened interest in the lesson; then in a greater pleasure; then in a keener appreciation of meaning; then in finer and more delicate shades of intellectual values in vocal expression; and finally (at least in the majority of cases), the rich ripe fruit of the harvest will appear in the vocal expression not only of all shades of meaning, but of feeling, emotion, passion.

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More space is devoted to the chapters on Grouping and Punctuation than to the others, because the former is the basis of all interpretation: *The group is the unit*; and the latter, experience shows, is the most interesting aspect for students, and does more to sharpen their wits and keep them on the alert than any other phase of the subject.

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While with enlarged knowledge and increased experience with books less and less effort is required to read them, the time will never come when the reading of a good book will be easy in the sense that it becomes a mere automatic process. In time conscious effort gives way to unconscious effort, but it is effort, concentrated effort. After considerable difficulty one learns to ride a bicycle and to control it automatically; but one must keep pedaling for all the automatism. So it is with reading. Automatic as the process be-

comes of recognizing words, let the attention deviate for a single instant, and the result may be a total collapse. The worst of it, however, is that in many cases the mental collapse is not so evident as it would be in the case of a bicycle. But a series of mental mishaps cannot but eventuate in total ruin, and that phrase, I think, characterizes the state of mind of most people with regard to the printed page.

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It may be objected that our method is too slow; that if we were to read every page as slowly as I am advocating in some passages, we should never get on. The answer is (1) that while there are in books thousands of phrases that might be slighted without any serious loss to a particular student, it is quite possible that another student might by disregarding a single phrase lose what would be for him the gist of the whole chapter; (2) that patient analysis at the beginning is the only cure for the misreading that is the outcome of the wretched methods of the grammar grades; (3) that painstaking study eventuates in greater facility in sight reading; and (4) that reading is not only an end in itself, but can be made the means to develop the powers of concentration, observation, and discrimination.

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As a supplement to Denotation I should like the teacher to ponder carefully these words of Arlo Bates, in his *Talks on Writing English*:

One of the things which often puzzles beginners is how to increase their vocabulary. Of course, reading

is one of the most effective means of enlarging one's knowledge of the language,—but it is only careful reading, reading in which are studied the force and the color terms as well as their literal meaning, that is of any marked value in this direction. It is said that Thackeray was in the habit of studying the dictionary with a frank purpose of adding to his knowledge of words. . . . In general there is far too little stress laid upon the use of the dictionary. There should be in every preparatory school a regular exercise in the use of the dictionary, and in it all students should be required to join. The teacher should read an extract or a sentence, or should give out words to the class, and have the meanings and derivations actually looked up at the moment. The differing values of synonyms should be examined; and if possible something of the history of the words given. The aim should be to encourage the student in the habit of having a lexicon at hand and of using it constantly.

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It is the failure on the part of many amateur and professional readers to apprehend the Connotation in literature that permits them to present mediocre literature (?) to their audiences. It makes no difference what audiences want, Art's function is to supply what they need. In the name of a noble art I protest against bringing it into competition with vaudeville. Teachers of elocution and elocutionists themselves have paid the price of pleasing the "barren spectators" by losing altogether the sympathy and approval of "the judicious." There is only one way out for those who know what elocution really is—the handmaid of literature.

How strange it is that the world acclaims the art

of the musician—the violinist's, pianist's—and denies equal rank and esteem to the elocutionist, whose art, reproductive just as a musician's is, is fully as difficult as that of the musical virtuoso and—have you thought of it?—infinitely more rare! There are a dozen great musical performers to one great elocutionist. The highest gifts in elocution are far rarer than in music; but because the great majority of people do not understand what good literature is, and care nothing about it, there is little encouragement for the vocal interpreter of great literature. Only by creating, through our schools, an appreciation of what is best in literature can we hope to have artistic readers, and, what is most necessary, an audience to listen to them. Teachers of literature and of elocution may be certain that the student who reads literature rich in connotation cannot fail to grow in understanding of and sympathy toward a higher and higher level of artistic appreciation, and this appreciation (in the sense of understanding and *experiencing* literature as literature) is the most potent factor in the development of the reader.

In order that I may not be misunderstood, I would add that I do not claim that all who appreciate great literature are artistic readers. For one may be self-conscious, or awkward, or weak in voice, or a creature of repressive habit. Frequently, too, one may have developed mannerisms which (since the reader is unconscious of them) stand between his conception and the audience. But, granting all this, the fact still remains that there can be no adequate vocal interpre-

tation of great literature unless, through connotation, the mind, the heart, the imagination of the speaker, are touched, aroused, inflamed with a mighty passion. It is primarily the reader's joy in the text that inspires him: and out of this inspiration alone can come good vocal expression.

So far as the average student is concerned vocal interpretation is a secondary matter. To enjoy literature for its beauty, for the emotions it engenders within us, for the stimulus it gives to our imaginations, for the noble impulses it calls up in us—this is the goal of literary study. And when the student enjoys, he longs to share his delight with others, and that is the impulse, the fundamental impulse, that urges him to express vocally.

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